Knowledge Base Software 101:
Everything you need to know

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What is Knowledge base software?

In order to understand what a knowledge base software is, you first need to understand what is a knowledge base.

A knowledge base is a collection of valuable information and data about various topics.

It includes information and data in various forms like how-to-articles, guides, tips & tricks, and product/services walkthroughs, frequently asked questions, and more.

Depending on the needs of the organization, a knowledge base can be created for both external as well as internal use.

A knowledge base software is a centralized database used to collect, organize, retrieve, search, and share information and data about a topic, department, or product/service for better accessibility and ease of use.

The most essential purpose of a knowledge base software is to provide the required organizational knowledge to the right people. A single organization can hold multiple knowledge bases depending on the different needs of the organization.

Types of Knowledge base software

While no two knowledge bases consist of the same information and data, they can be typically categorized into two broad types: External and Internal Knowledge Base

01

External Knowledge Base Software

An external knowledge base software, also known as the customer serving knowledge base software is primarily focused on providing all the relevant information required by customers and clients regarding the products/services offered.

An external knowledge base can carry information regarding a variety of topics including frequently asked questions(FAQs), product walkthroughs, how-to videos, user manuals, and product documentation.

While the information base is maintained by internal staff, the software is made accessible for the public to easily navigate and find information.
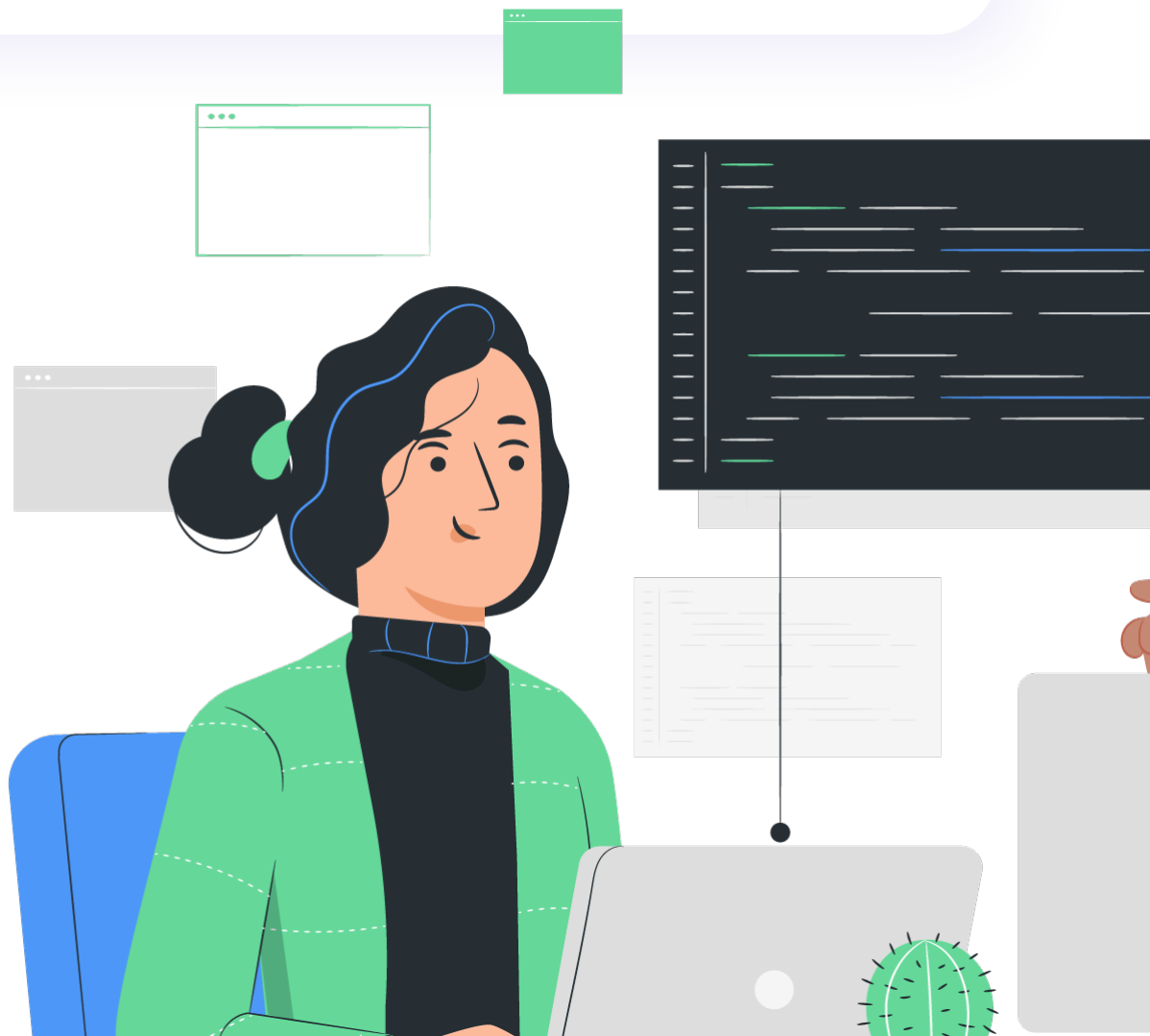
02

Internal Knowledge Base Software

An internal knowledge base software is the compilation of the company's information and knowledge with the employees of the company.

As the nature of this knowledge can be sensitive and private, it is only accessible to the company staff in order to maintain the confidentiality of the information.

The internal knowledge base contains all the necessary information that is required by an employee to successfully perform their duties.

An effective internal knowledge base software will increase employee productivity and reduce frustration due to repetitive searches.

A conventional internal knowledge base software will consist of the following information: Benefits and compensation, Onboarding, Company strategy, Performance Analytics, Employee development resources, Technical help, Organizational structures, Market and company research, Brand guidelines, Policies, procedures, protocols, and much more.
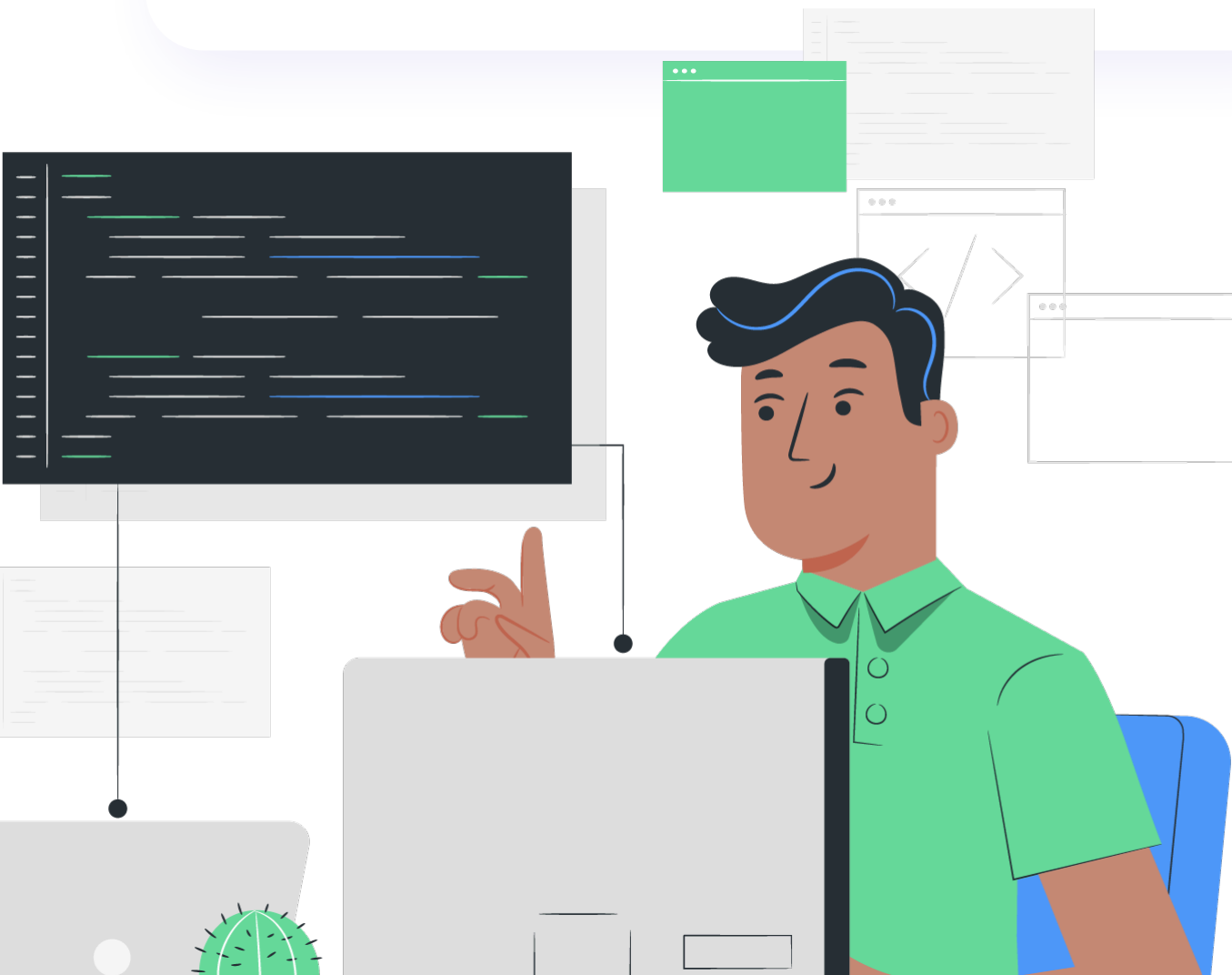
Why every organization needs a knowledge base?

Most companies have an online knowledge base these days. A good and efficient knowledge base comes with a lot of perks apart from providing easy access to valuable information and data.

01

Self-service customer support

A self-service knowledge base provides the perfect customer support platform that is fast and easily accessible.

It ensures that customers and clients do not have to rely on customer support to get answers to very common and frequently asked questions and can easily navigate through the products and services on their own with greater ease.

It also allows your staff to reach out faster to the customers who actually require hands-on assistance with the products and services.

This enables the customers to control their exposure and experience with the products and services and adds to the overall customer experience of your brand.
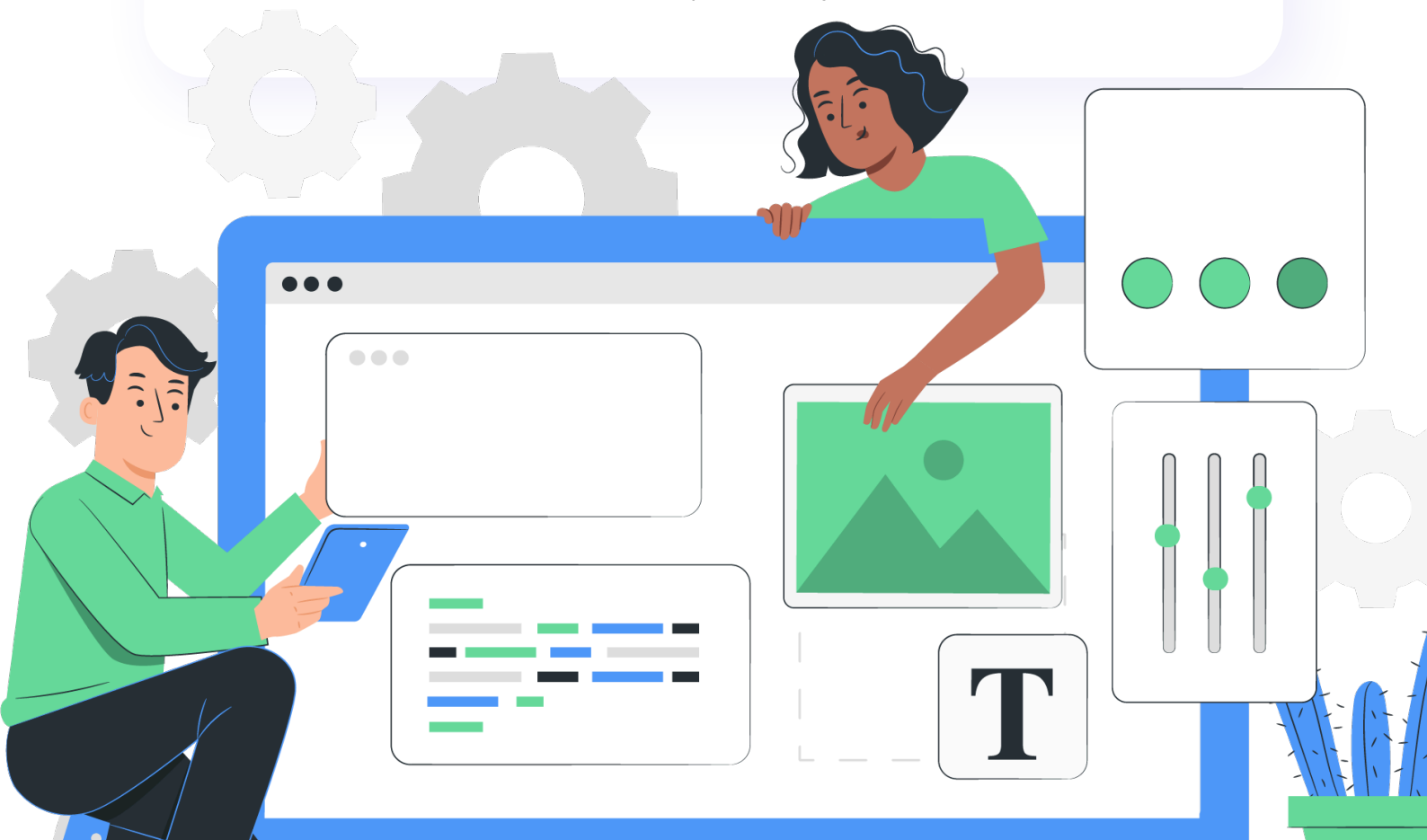
02

Time-saving

We cannot emphasize more the fact that time is money. One of the biggest perks of having a knowledge base is that it is extremely time-saving on both the customer end and the staff's end.

One of the biggest reasons why customers prefer the self-service option for basic tasks like changing username and password is the amount of time and effort it saves them.

And as for the customer support staff, they can eliminate an excess influx of customer requests and truly focus on much-complicated requests put forward by customers and revert back to them with the right course of action for greater customer satisfaction.

03

Quicker onboarding and training

Your internal knowledge base comes in handy when fresh recruits and trainees are looking for answers related to their training and onboarding process.`

An internal knowledge base provides the employees with a one-stop solution for all their learning requirements to succeed in their professional careers.

This allows the employees to quickly get accustomed to this mode of learning and progress at a much faster rate and contribute to the growth of the company.

It also makes the process of knowledge retention much easier as employees now have easy access to all the company's valuable information.

04

Easy upkeep and knowledge sharing

A knowledge base drastically enhances the knowledge-sharing process within the organization.

This knowledge base can be used as the central database of information as it is a combination of knowledge and information collected from members of different departments.

A consistent base of knowledge allows the employees to be on the same page when approaching a problem.

A knowledge base also makes it easy to preserve the existing organizational knowledge and keep adding fresh information to the knowledge base.

This option comes to the rescue when a team member leaves the company. If you have an existing knowledge base then you won't have to worry about the loss of knowledge that will come with the departure of an employee.

05

Enhanced business efficiency

And the ultimate benefit that knowledge base software provides is enhancing the overall business efficiency of the company this increased efficiency is a combined result of various other benefits like increased customer satisfaction, time-saving, easy access to knowledge, and increased employee productivity.

It allows the team to stay on the same page at all levels and adopt an extensive approach toward organizational goals.

Things to keep in mind while creating a Knowledge base

01

KISS (Keep it simple stupid)

The first and the most important thing to keep in mind while creating a knowledge base is to not overcomplicate things.

Most people stress out about the fact that they have to start from scratch when it comes to building a strong and detailed knowledge base but that's just not the case.

Start by carefully analyzing the already existing knowledge you have and strategically add that to your knowledge base.

Then move around other simple pieces of information that are presented to the support staff on a daily basis such as instructions to create an account or reset the account password.

Once you are through with all such topics then move on to much more complex topics that require more time, effort, and expertise from multiple departments.

02

Teamwork

It is very essential to motivate your employees to actively contribute towards sharing valuable knowledge they possess in the form of quality articles.

Your employees can suggest areas and topics that require special attention to gather quality information for the users.

Encourage collaboration between teams from different departments in order to share the available information to the knowledge base.

This will ensure that all the information and knowledge available with the company will be recorded to the base for future use.

Moreover shared knowledge between different departments is an excellent way to create a coherent and systematic front to better deal with daily tasks.

03

Use customer questions

Using frequently asked questions from customers is one of the best ways to lay a strong foundation.

Get in touch with support staff to come up with a list of questions that are most frequently asked by the customers and plan out the information to be added to the knowledge base accordingly.

This will ensure that you do not miss out on essential pieces of information that the customers are looking for on a regular basis.

Give special emphasis on the language used to answer these questions because the use of difficult technical terms might confuse the users.

Use language that's easy to read and understand for the customers to fully leverage the knowledge base.

04

Easy access

Another important aspect to keep in mind is the accessibility of the knowledge base.

Whether internal or external knowledge base, make sure that it is easily accessible and available to the targeted group.

Make sure the articles and related information are labeled correctly for the users to easily find it without consuming much of their time in the research process.

Search widgets are an amazing option that makes finding information very easy as it pulls out the articles related to the keyword inserted in the search bar.

05

Review consistently

A strong knowledge base goes through a constant process of review and revision.

Keep adding fresh and relevant information regarding new product launches or services to keep the knowledge base up to date for an enhanced customer experience.

Always ensure that the information provided on the knowledge base is accurate and relevant to the user to keep up with the latest changes made to the products and services in order to update them to the knowledge base accordingly.

Essential features to look for in a KBS

There is a plethora of knowledge base software available in the market. How to pick the right one for your company that perfectly caters to your unique demands.

01

Search Bar

As discussed previously, search engines are very helpful when it comes to extracting the right information without wasting much time on research.

It is not usual for the users to go through the entire categories section to find the information they are looking for.

Instead, they use the search bar to get answers to their questions as quickly as possible.

In the absence of the search bar, the user is very likely to either leave the site or submit an unnecessary ticket which will lead to increased time and effort on both ends and might affect user satisfaction.

02

Self-service portal

When you opt for a knowledge base software with a self-service portal, you ensure that your customers can handle and resolve minor issues on their own.

Minor tasks such as changing passwords and viewing order status do not require additional support from the staff.

This will also ensure that the support staff is not bothered by such minor issues and can focus on solving much more complex issues at hand.

Most customers like to be guided by a self-service portal rather than by a support staff member as it is quick and easy to use.

03

Feedback and analytics

You will be losing out on some very important statistics if your software does not have a feedback and analytics system.

Feedback and analytics allow you to gain knowledge on how customers are using your products and services and help you improve your knowledge base to enhance your customer service by better meeting their needs.

If your knowledge base software does not have a built-in feedback and analytics section, make sure that it can easily integrate with third-party applications to offer those particular services.

04

Content management

When you have multiple employees contributing to the knowledge base, it is important to have content management features in your software that allows the users to create, revise, schedule, and publish the content to the knowledge base.

The more user-friendly and comfortable your content management interface will be, the more likely the employees would update their knowledge base.

05

Integration with third-party apps

Every company has its unique needs and if your knowledge base software is not flexible then it might hinder your ability to provide your users with the best experience possible.

Check if your software allows you to integrate third-party applications and tools that allow you to enhance the capabilities of the knowledge base.

A solid knowledge base software will enhance your user experience and support your overall business growth. If possible try the software with a free trial as it will allow you to collect feedback from your team and decide whether or not the product is compatible with your organizational needs.

04

Elevio

Elevio is a smart knowledge base software that helps you create and manage a help center to fulfil your specific needs. It helps you record and maintain your organizational knowledge into a centralized database to provide your users with a seamless interface for all their queries.

Check out Elevio's free trial to experience all the features essential to enhance your customer service and employee satisfaction. Greater efficiency and improved self-service are just a click away with Elevio.

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