

PRODUCT OVERVIEW

KNOVA KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

WHAT SETS KNOVA APART?

Most knowledge tools out there are lightweight modules made to handle simple FAQs and backed with basic keyword search that often returns dubious results. Knova Knowledge Management (KM) from Aptean is a fully realized KM application built for the enterprise and especially designed to meet the needs of high-tech customer service and support. That means even complex questions can be handled by a self-service session on your website to drive efficiency while creating an exceptional customer experience.

That's the elevator pitch. What follows are the detailed differentiators that make Knova the choice for the world's largest service and support organizations.

KNOWLEDGEBASE SEARCH

WHAT KNOVA DOES	HOW IT'S DIFFERENT	WHY IT MATTERS
<p>Searches with concepts, not just keywords. Knova knows "Blue Screen of Death" is related to "Stop Error," and "Running Slow" is about performance. Knova differentiates between synonyms and concepts, allowing fine-grain control of the search experience. Out-of-the-box, highly tunable, multilingual, industry-specific concept maps ("ontologies") shorten time to value.</p>	<p>Most knowledgebase (KB) modules are very literal-minded: if users don't type something exactly the way it's in the document, they won't find it. At best, they support a manually entered "keyword" field inside individual articles, which is labor intensive and hard to maintain.</p>	<p>Knova does away with the "what did they call it" guessing game, returning relevant results regardless of specific word choice. By treating concepts separate from synonyms, Knova increases precision and decreases noise. Authors don't need to guess keywords to put in each article; Knova provides a single place to manage concept maps that apply to all articles and queries.</p>
<p>Guides users through the search process suggesting possible products, symptoms, or other terms you define as relevant to your knowledge to focus results on the most helpful content. Of course, they can always narrow results using their own query terms too.</p>	<p>If users don't get good results from an initial search in a KB module, it's "game over." They miss out on getting help that adapts dynamically to their context and where they are in the search process and get only statically configured suggestions about what to do next.</p>	<p>Knova makes sure that users never run into dead ends, which makes them more successful with search and encourages them to search next time too. This advantage comes with less, not more, investment of administration effort because suggestions are dynamic and not static.</p>
<p>Corrects spelling mistakes with a friendly "did you mean?" option.</p>	<p>With KB modules, misspelled words fail silently, misleading the user into thinking that their content isn't there.</p>	<p>Knova delivers the right answers even with misspelled words—which is what users expect based on their experience with Internet search engines.</p>

KNOWLEDGBASE SEARCH (CONTINUED)

WHAT KNOVA DOES	HOW IT'S DIFFERENT	WHY IT MATTERS
Supports Advanced Search , including intelligent processing of Booleans. Users can explicitly and precisely control search behavior if they so choose.	A one-size-fits-all search box gives users no way to focus results on specific sources, types or combinations of search terms.	Users familiar with the Advanced Search page in Internet search engines will feel at home in Knova, but KB modules won't meet their expectations.
Delivers best bets and targeted documents based on easily-defined business rules that provide the most salient information directly to the user—with no need for them to look through search results.	KB modules don't have any mechanism for associating specific content with specific search terms or concepts.	Some documents (like compatibility guides, policy documents, troubleshooters, or how-tos) are the definitive answer to a customer's question. With Knova, customers don't need to play hide-and-seek to find them.
Provides tools for visually tuning the search experience so content and customer experience experts can make sure that the best content bubbles to the top for a broad range of search queries.	KB modules just deliver an undifferentiated results list ordered semi-randomly based on how keywords in the search terms and the document happen to match up.	Knova's search engine is smart, but visual search tuning allows nontechnical knowledgebase or website owners to make it even smarter—not just for one or two popular queries, but for entire classes and topics of popular queries. Visual search tuning is never required, but it's a nice value-added option for high-ROI search cases.

“In today’s competitive environment, customer service is a major differentiator that drives revenue and loyalty. As such, it requires attention and investment. Knova is uniquely positioned to serve enterprise companies with premium cross-channel knowledge management tools for self-service and assisted support.”

John Ragsdale

Vice President of Technology Research,
Technology Services Industry Association (TSIA)

UNIVERSAL SEARCH

WHAT KNOVA DOES	HOW IT'S DIFFERENT	WHY IT MATTERS
<p>Integrates knowledgebase content with content anywhere outside the knowledgebase to provide universal search and browse: one place to go for answers and issue resolution. With smart indexing that leverages automated tagging based on existing metadata, the repository, and the content itself, Knova delivers a smart, guided search experience that spans all relevant knowledge sources.</p>	<p>KB modules are limited to only searching content authored in that module. There is no facility for integrating useful content from manuals, user communities, collateral, or other sources of relevant information. True, other tools can index all your content for search, but only a true knowledge base system can normalize search across all your content with a consistent set of metadata categories, user rating and usage analytics.</p>	<p>Customers expect “one-stop shopping.” They hate having to go to multiple systems and do multiple searches to get what they need. And internal users require efficient access to all the information they need at their fingertips, regardless of where or how that knowledge was created. Knova provides access to the single source of truth for users – making all content search the same and look like it comes from the same source – regardless of the source or form that relevant knowledge takes.</p>
<p>“Slices” large PDF documents (like manuals) to retrieve only the relevant sections of content. This makes it possible for users to easily find only the nuggets they need in traditional, unwieldy print publications.</p>	<p>KB modules don’t index external sources like manuals. The only way to retrieve a manual (or any other large document) is as an attachment, and KB module search ignores the content in attachments. Even if the user finds the attachment, they have no way to navigate through a document that may be literally hundreds of pages long.</p>	<p>Legacy content like installation guides, product documentation, design documents, and other PDF documents can have extremely useful information in them—but it often seems like trying to find a needle in a haystack. With Knova, formal documents are not only findable by search, but the relevant “sections” are returned in virtually no time at all complete with auto-generated synopsis, greatly increasing their usability.</p>

PERSONALIZED SELF-SERVICE

WHAT KNOVA DOES	HOW IT'S DIFFERENT	WHY IT MATTERS
<p>Provides microsites tailored to specific customer segments or groups delivering personalized “push” content, user experiences, and branding. Microsites are easily configured by non-technical users and new ones can be added in minutes as the need arises.</p> <p>Microsites also provide virtual home pages for products.</p>	<p>KB modules provide a single generic portal. Each user has the same experience, visual design, and content as all other users, whether or not it's appropriate for them.</p>	<p>Most enterprises don't serve a generic customer—there are different product interests, industries, business needs, entitlements, and roles, all of which need to be considered when delivering service. Humans do this naturally, but without sophisticated Microsite technology like Knova's, self-service fails to connect with customers on their own terms.</p>
<p>Delivers Resolution Flows to guide employees and agents through a troubleshooting process. Resolution Flows can result in precise document retrieval or any other desired interaction, for example, a highly efficient case opening process or internal escalation.</p>	<p>KB modules generally don't even have rudimentary “decision trees,” a very simplified version of Resolution Flows. Either users like their search results, or they have to start over from scratch.</p>	<p>Some situations come up again and again, and cause significant inconvenience or dissatisfaction among customers. Resolution Flows can provide white-glove treatment for these cases, stepping users through a natural interview to guide them to the best, most satisfying resolution whatever it happens to be.</p>
<p>Embeds anywhere on your customer-facing website as well as provides a full-featured, out-of-the-box service and support portal experience.</p>	<p>KB modules provide a static, difficult-to-configure, one-size-fits-all end user interface. Their search capabilities are not designed to be integrated into other web portals or systems.</p>	<p>Unless search and other knowledge capabilities are a seamless part of the customer experience, it's hard to convince customers to self-serve. Knova can integrate anywhere: into an RMA or case opening process, in site search, in communities—wherever knowledge can help. KB modules require flipping to their own page for any search, resulting in a clunky user experience.</p>
<p>Scales to millions of external users and thousands of internal users. Knova has run service and support for some of the largest sites on the Internet.</p>	<p>KB modules are architected to support internal CRM system users—largescale self-service was not considered in their architecture. Accordingly, performance suffers badly in selfservice deployments, and simply adding servers isn't an option.</p>	<p>The more self-service is used, the more benefit the knowledgebase brings. If self-service can't scale, neither will the ROI.</p>

PERSONALIZED SELF-SERVICE (CONTINUED)

WHAT KNOVA DOES	HOW IT'S DIFFERENT	WHY IT MATTERS
Makes content immediately available for searching, browsing or proactive delivery.	KB modules index content periodically, so one hour, or two, or even longer can elapse before content is returned in searches.	When a breaking issue comes up, it's essential to get the word out immediately to employees and customers alike. With continuous indexing, Knova means never having to wait for content.
Enables localized content presentation, browsing and searching, giving users access to content in their preferred languages.	Search technology in KB modules is typically English-only, and there's no facility for setting preferred languages or creating localized microsites for global users.	Self-service users who don't find content in their preferred language will give up on self-service and open a case instead, or will simply quit and be less satisfied, effective and loyal.
Renders documents flexibly based on their context (including which Microsite is being used). Using easily updated stylesheets, content entered using simple, structured templates appears professional and well designed to customers.	KB modules work with plain text and generic templates, so their articles look more like database entries and less like something a customer should see. Worse still, KB modules sometimes remove line breaks, turning sample code or configurations into gobbledygook.	"You only get one chance to make a first impression," and content appearance is crucial. Yet, it's not a good use of subject expert time to have them do formatting. With Knova, it's easy to deliver polished webpages without extra formatting effort.
Supports community rating of all returned content , both authored within the knowledgebase or indexed from an outside repository. Community ratings guide customers to the most popular content, and ratings also nudge search results towards proven winners.	KB modules may allow users to say "yes, this was helpful" or "no, it wasn't," but that's as far as they go. KB modules just don't have any way of learning socially. Customer ratings aren't displayed on search results, and they certainly don't influence them. And since KB modules don't support documents authored outside of their own module, users can't rate external documents either.	In the area of the social web, customers expect to be able to provide ratings and feedback, and to have their own experience be improved and made more relevant based on what others think too. Knova provides this capability out-of-the-box. In addition to better search results, there's no need to purchase and integrate a third-party rating and feedback solution.
Integrates customer communities or support forums. Search results can include community questions and answers, and the knowledgebase can repurpose valuable and relevant community conversations.	KB modules have no community or forums capability, and no way of indexing and retrieving content that comes from a community. Knova enables and integrates community activity into service and support delivery processes.	In many cases, customers prefer to get answers from other customers, and they're willing to share expertise that might not even exist inside your organization. Knova eliminates the need to purchase and integrate a third-party forums solution.

KNOWLEDGE CAPTURE AND IMPROVEMENT

WHAT KNOVA DOES	HOW IT'S DIFFERENT	WHY IT MATTERS
<p>Provides universal template management making it easy to tailor templates for issue resolutions, how-tos, and Q&As. Simple, targeted templates make it easier to capture content and improve content structure as well.</p>	<p>Most KB modules provide a generic template (like "issue" and "solution") that can't be modified or extended. Accordingly, users end up effectively making their own templates on the fly, increasing effort and reducing consistency.</p>	<p>Good templates streamline knowledge capture, help with the troubleshooting process, and result in more findable, usable, content. With Knova, it's simple for non-technical administrators to create and maintain the right set of templates.</p>
<p>Enables WYSIWYG content entry, which supports emphasis, code fragments, images, and other valuable communication tools as needed. No HTML coding is required.</p>	<p>KB modules generally support ASCII text, and that's it – any additional formatting has to be done in difficult-to-use (and non-searchable) attachments.</p>	<p>While knowledge articles look great with no formatting, thanks to the template stylesheets provided by Knova, full, rich media editing means that authors can use design to communicate even more effectively whenever they desire.</p>
<p>Supports localized content with authoring in multiple languages, the ability to link localized versions of an article to a master article, and the ability to export translation workflow requests in industry-standard formats.</p>	<p>KB modules are designed for a single language. No provision is made for all the mechanics required to keep localized content in sync or to work with localization vendors.</p>	<p>Customers demand and are now conditioned to expect content in their native language. Maintaining a localized, dynamic knowledgebase requires much more than just doublebyte support: Knova provides the end-to-end workflow for creating, managing and translating global content.</p>
<p>Allows articles to link to other articles maintaining link integrity as content evolves.</p>	<p>KB modules have limited or no capabilities for actively managing document links.</p>	<p>With Knova, customers and employees can navigate flexibly to get additional details on how to perform a step or troubleshoot a problem without ever worrying about a broken link.</p>
<p>Supports KCS, Knowledge-Centered Support, the industry best practice for capturing, improving and reusing knowledge in the support workflow. Knova is KCS <i>Verified v4</i>, meaning it has received the most recent and most rigorous KCS certification in the industry.</p>	<p>KB modules are not KCS <i>Verified v4</i>, and their architecture doesn't enable KCS practices, including "flag it or fix it," "capture in the workflow," "structure for reuse," the solution lifecycle, and much more.</p>	<p>KCS is a set of processes, but without the right technology support, it becomes too hard for users to follow the process and KCS can't be sustained. Knova is built from the ground up to support industry best practices providing the most possible real-world value from an investment in knowledge.</p>

KNOWLEDGE ADMINISTRATION

WHAT KNOVA DOES	HOW IT'S DIFFERENT	WHY IT MATTERS
<p>Enables automated content cleanup and scheduled expiry keeping the knowledgebase up-to-date and automatically pruning no-longer-relevant knowledgebase articles.</p> <p>Specialized reports show what content is infrequently used making it easier to separate the wheat from the chaff.</p>	<p>With KB modules, all content maintenance is manual. With limited reporting, it's hard to even tell what articles should be manually retired.</p>	<p>The greatest enemy of relevance is out-of-date, unmaintained, no-longer-true content. In a perfect world, content is always assiduously maintained by hand. In the real world, evergreen content requires automation that Knova has and KB modules don't.</p>
<p>Supports version histories and enables easy roll-backs so it's clear who has done what to articles, and it's easy to know what articles said at a given point in time. Roll-backs make it easy to undo any inadvertent mistakes made in the content update process.</p>	<p>KB modules generally do not support article versioning. They're memory-free: If someone changes an article, no one knows what they did, and (absent an off-line, labor-intensive backup recovery) it's not possible to undo it.</p>	<p>One of the strengths of a knowledgebase is that it's dynamic—content keeps up with changes in the world. However, with dynamic content comes the need to manage those changes with version tracking and easy roll-backs to an earlier state.</p>
<p>Provides a bulk update capability integrated with a knowledge inventory view that allows administrators to rapidly work with knowledgebase content and all metadata, whether inside the knowledgebase or attached to external documents. Administrators can even do bulk search-and-replace options, for example, if a product's name changes.</p>	<p>KB modules generally have no ability for administrators to rapidly slice and dice even internal data, and no way to manage metadata changes efficiently.</p>	<p>When a new release comes out, or if a product is end-of-lifed, or if new policies for information sharing are implemented, Knova makes it easy for knowledge administrators to make the necessary updates all on one screen. KB modules require administrators to open and update documents one at a time, a herculean task.</p>

USER AND PERMISSION ADMINISTRATION

WHAT KNOVA DOES	HOW IT'S DIFFERENT	WHY IT MATTERS
Unifies user management and administration so there is a common user entity for all roles: knowledgebase user, knowledgebase contributor, forums participant, and/or administrator.	Traditional CRM systems maintain different repositories for "users" (employees) and "contacts" (customers), which makes it harder to manage knowledge and social support functions that work inside and outside the company.	Easier administration means lower total cost of ownership for Knova, and the ability to get better analytics that span across the employee and customer community.
Provides fine-grain access controls and permissions to microsites, content sources, documents and document sections.	Most KB modules assume that content is either externally available for everyone or only internally available full stop. Articles cannot be partially public with private sections.	With Knova, knowledge can be shared selectively with partners, specific customers, segments or entitlement levels. Additionally, private information in "public" documents provides flexibility for sharing more without over-disclosing. For example, the customer-facing version of an article might have a workaround, but the internal note could have a reference to the relevant entry in an internal defect tracking system.

ANALYTICS

WHAT KNOVA DOES	HOW IT'S DIFFERENT	WHY IT MATTERS
Logs the entire customer experience so organizations can know not only what was viewed, but how their users found it.	At best, KB modules provide reporting on document click-throughs with no insight on the overall customer experience.	The only way to tune and improve the customer experience is to understand it. Only Knova provides the breadcrumbs that let you follow users' paths and make them smoother.
Measures resolution success so you can demonstrate a compelling business case for self-service, as well as discover the areas that could benefit from additional content or tuning.	KB modules may report on the number of document clicks, and in some cases provide search logs, but there is no measure of customers' success with search and no insight into possible ROI.	Everyone knows self-service is important, but it's hard to measure its value and hard to know how to improve it. Knova provides advanced heuristics out-of-the-box that demonstrate success and enable continuous improvement.

ANALYTICS (CONTINUED)

WHAT KNOVA DOES	HOW IT'S DIFFERENT	WHY IT MATTERS
<p>Identifies content gaps based on search traffic, search success rates, and content coverage. This allows organizations to focus their content development in the highest-value areas.</p>	<p>KB modules may have a “searches with no matches” report, but that yields much less actionable insight than content gap reports—many queries have some response, perhaps just not a helpful response.</p>	<p>Organizations need to understand what topics are generating customer interest that is not being completely satisfied through self-service. Knova’s Content Gap reports provide just this insight.</p>
<p>Documents the impact of high-value product improvements by reporting on how often documents are reused to close cases, and how often they’re viewed by customers. Knova’s data helps quantify the value of product enhancement or defect requests.</p>	<p>Some KB modules have a way of tracking case links, but they rarely provide a comprehensive view of the impact of documented issues in the customer experience.</p>	<p>It’s hard to get development organizations to implement product changes without compelling data that shows what the fix would mean for the customer experience. Knova provides data from both internal and self-service use to justify engineering investment in high-priority customer issues.</p>
<p>Reports on the value of team members’ contributions to the knowledge management process. Knova provides a comprehensive view of activities and business outcomes that allows all team members, and their leaders, to assess and improve their performance.</p>	<p>While KB modules generally have a few reports on knowledge activity by person, they don’t provide a comprehensive dashboard designed for end-to-end performance assessment.</p>	<p>To be successful, knowledge management must become part of the job. So individual contributors and leaders need easy access to the information they need to assess their performance. Knova provides an integrated dashboard that pulls together knowledge additions, updates, reuses, ratings, and all the other information needed to see the value they’re creating and to coach them to higher levels of performance.</p>



More than 9,000 customers around the world rely on us to give them a competitive edge. By providing innovative, industry-driven enterprise application software, Aptean helps businesses to satisfy their customers, operate most efficiently, and stay at the forefront of their industry.

For more information, visit: www.aptean.com