

Product Documentation vs. Knowledge Base

When trying to determine whether content is product documentation or knowledge base:

Product documentation and knowledge bases live in different places, are largely maintained by different teams, and contain a lot of the same information. Content placement depends on the type and purpose of content.

At UCLA:

- **Product document** is managed and created by the Service Owner.
- **KB articles** are created and managed by the Help Desks.

Product documentation:

- Product documentation is built around product functionality (i.e., it's proactive).
- It strives to cover all product functionality, but no more.
- Every feature should be documented, even if it's rarely used.
- Doesn't discuss external systems or integrations unless they are an official part of the product (i.e., no "unofficial workarounds").

Knowledge Base articles:

- The KB is built around customer inquiries (i.e., it's reactive).
- Its focus is troubleshooting.
- KB article topics come from common customer questions whose answers don't belong in the product documentation (see above).
- Every article is structured around a problem and a solution.

Each team responsible for developing and/or operating a system is responsible for its product documentation:

- e.g. IAMUCLA is responsible for Account Management Tool product documentation. IAMUCLA has been using the Confluence wiki as its product documentation site. It's in the process of moving them over to it.ucla.edu.

For more information go to:

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