# Knowledgebases for Customers

Introduction

Red7's knowledgebase service can be used by a workgroup to maintain an online knowledgebase for customer or company use.

The service is specifically designed for organizations that gather online information and use it for their own product or service research, or make the information available to their customers. Consider, for example, an organization devoted to providing information for small business owners. In the past they might have maintained an online web page containing links to online small business resources, such as investors, banks, business advice and government policymakers. But, as this type of list grows it becomes unmanageable, and keeping the links current can be very time-consuming. So turning it into a search page that is always up to date could be a big step forward.

Red7's web-based knowledgebase service lets a small editorial or research group (usually a dozen or fewer people within the organization itself) create and maintain the URL list online, categorize the URLs (using their own vocabulary, like "resources" "legal" "financial") and keep the links completely up to date. And the organization's customers can search the knowledgebase, right from their web site, to retrieve current information. *The knowledgebase is basically a private database of URLs with an accompanying search engine.*
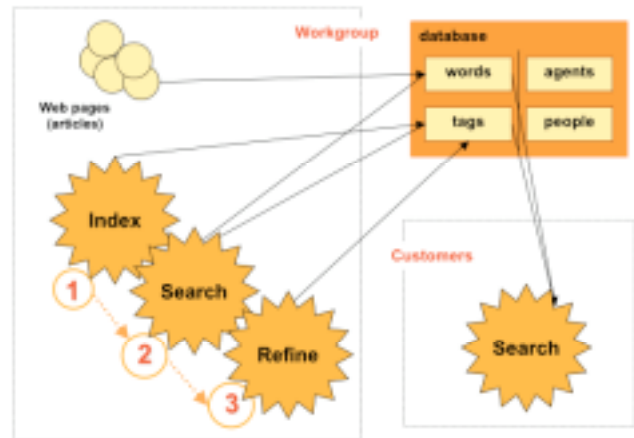
1. Creating a Knowledgebase

The first step in creating a knowledgebase is to find and **index** URLs, which is as simple as browsing and then making a single click to add the page. Both Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator browsers
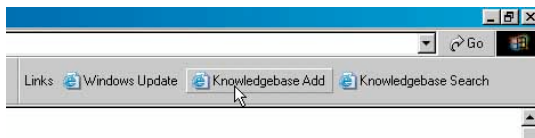
are supported. Workgroup members browse to find the URLs they wish to add to the knowledgebase, click once on a special toolbar link, type a tag (category) value, and press ENTER. Like any self-respecting search engine, the knowledgebase server creates a master index of words contained in the web pages, so customers or web site visitors may search for topics of interest. Newly-added URLs are indexed within minutes. Creating a knowledgebase is done entirely online and requires no special software

or browser plug-ins. Text files containing more timely content can also be created and uploaded into the knowledgebase.

2. Searching a Knowledgebase

As soon as URLs have been indexed, both the workgroup and the customers can begin **searching**. The knowledgebase search is usually initiated from a page within the organization's web site. In fact the search can be coded into a sidebar or footer on *every* page on the web site. Specific HTML code (a *form)* within the page causes the customer's search request to be sent to the knowledgebase server, which performs the search and returns the formatted results to the customer.

3. Refining a knowledgebase

The system periodically reviews the indexed pages, bringing references up to date and notifying an administrator if there's a problem with a page. Group members and administrators may add more tags to articles, regroup (or remove) tag values, and continue refining the knowledgebase over time.

Requirements and Availability

The knowledgebase is a web application, written as Java servlets and it resides on Red7's central server. Data is password protected. The only modification required at an organization's web site is the addition of the HTML *form* customers use to request the search. The knowledgebase is offered as a 24x7 service, economically priced and available right now.