Fact Guru

A tool for storing, organizing and finding facts

Fact Guru provides easy access to all the facts you need. Instead of using a search engine to look in documents, use FactGuru to store and access the facts that are important to your organization. With Fact Guru, knowledge is ready at your fingertips.
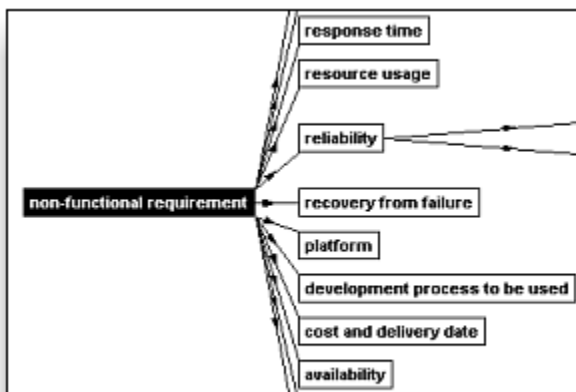

Features

- Choice of hierarchical, alphabetical or graphical display of subjects
- Clicking on a subject in the left pane brings up the fact table for the subject in the right pane
- The fact comparison table allows you to compare the differences between subjects
- Facts can contain pictures, sounds, video and links to web sites
- Facts about facts can be stored such as the date the fact was entered, who entered it, the source etc.
- Automatic glossary generation
- Automatic hyperlinking between subjects
- Multiple word sense feature

Fact Guru saves you time by:

- Storing facts grouped by subject in a highly structured knowledge base.
- Searching the knowledge base to find just the fact you need
- Comparing subjects to see their differences
- Viewing subjects in a graph to quickly and easily see relationships between them

Without Fact Guru

- Knowledge may be contradictory or confusing
- Terminology not standardized
- Facts are hidden in multiple documents

With Fact Guru

- Facts are concise and unambiguous
- Terminology is standardized
- All the facts are in one place

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Frequently asked questions about Fact Guru

What is a knowledge base? A knowledge base (often abbreviated *kb*) is a place to store knowledge about a topic in a concise, organized manner. It presents facts that you might otherwise find in a book, or in a collection of books or web sites. Understanding a topic is easier when you look at a knowledge base than when you read a book because only the essential information is in the knowledge base.

Why use a knowledge base? A knowledge base can save you time and money by acting as a repository of facts you would otherwise have to search for each time you needed them. Looking facts up in a knowledge base is fast and easy compared to finding them in a book, or searching on the web.

What is a fact? A fact is one piece of information about a subject. For example: "bicycle has two wheels" or "part number 2341 costs $2.95". It is expressed in simple and clear language that is easy to understand.

What is a hierarchy? A hierarchy is a way of arranging subjects to show the relationships between them. For example, a family tree is a hierarchy where the subjects (people) are arranged so that every subject is a child of the subject above it in the tree. The relationship shown in a family tree is "is a child of". Fact Guru arranges subjects in several types of hierarchies. The first is what is called a "kind of" hierarchy. In this type of hierarchy, the relationship is "is a kind of". Imagine a hierarchy of cars where subject is a kind of the subject above it. So you would see "car" with "sports car" below it and "Ferrari" below that. You can read this as "A sports car is a kind of car" and "A Ferrari is a kind of sports car". Fact Guru can also arrange subjects in a topic hierarchy. This is similar to the table of contents in a book where subjects are grouped under similar topics.

What is inheritance? In the general sense of the word, you *inherit* things from your parents: your genes for eye and hair colour and perhaps property or money. In Fact Guru subjects inherit things from their "parents" too. In the car kind of hierarchy, think of "car" as the parent and "sports car", "station wagon" and "luxury car" as its children. If car has a fact associated with it, such as "car has 4 wheels", then its children will inherit this fact. So sports cars, station wagons and luxury cars all have 4 wheels. The beauty of inheritance is that you only have to write the fact once - for the most general subject that it applies to - and all its descendants will inherit this fact. So Ferraris and Cadillacs also contain the fact that they have 4 wheels. In real life, you inherit things from both your parents. In Fact Guru, subjects can have more than one parent too. Actually, they can have as many as needed. This is called multiple inheritance.

Who might want to use Fact Guru? Fact Guru can be used by teachers, students, designers, writers and anyone else who needs to organize, understand and display knowledge.

What kind of information can you put in a Fact Guru knowledge base? A Fact Guru knowledge base can store text, pictures, video, sounds, or links to web sites. So you could create a knowledge base about your company's products, your favourite music, scientific data, or references for a course.

How do you create a knowledge base? Creating a knowledge base consists of finding information sources, defining the subjects, arranging the subject hierarchies, adding facts, and checking the knowledge base.

How long does it take to create a knowledge base? We have found that an experienced knowledge engineer can create a knowledge base from a good source of knowledge (such as a book) at a rate of about 20 facts an hour. This rate depends on the quality and type of the source of knowledge. If the knowledge engineer has to obtain the facts by interviewing other people it will obviously take longer to build a knowledge base than if the facts are already collected in some form. If the knowledge engineer has to deal with multiple, conflicting sources of facts, time will also be spent verifying and consolidating the knowledge.

Why would I want to spend the time creating a knowledge base? Once a knowledge base is built, it will save you time in the long run. All the work of gathering the facts into one place and verifying them has already been done. It's like having a proper filing system for your business documents instead of keeping post-it notes stuck all over your desk. If you already have the facts collected in a document, web site or catalogue, then it may be faster and more cost-efficient to hire our knowledge engineers to create the knowledge base. They are experienced in knowledge base development and can work rapidly and accurately. However, building a knowledge base yourself helps organize your ideas, clarifies the relationships between subjects and forces you to standardize your terminology. In fact, building a knowledge base is a good design exercise, whether you are planning to build a software system, write a book, or teach a course.