

CoreQuarry Glossary

Artifact

An artifact is any preserved representation of human, organizational, scientific, or computational activity from which knowledge may be derived.

Artifacts include, but are not limited to, documents, records, messages, datasets, images, software, multimedia, observations, and structured or unstructured content.

An artifact is defined by its role in inquiry rather than by its representation or storage format.

Authority

The source responsible for maintaining the correctness and currency of a particular body of information.

A knowledge system may preserve artifacts while delegating operational truth to authoritative external systems.

Composition

The act of forming an inquiry result from multiple artifacts, repositories, services, or authoritative sources.

Composition occurs at inquiry time and need not imply physical integration of the underlying information.

Essence

The underlying structural and semantic identity of an artifact, independent of its presentation syntax or serialization.

Different representations may express the same underlying essence.

Field Unification

The explicit mapping of structurally or semantically equivalent fields, paths, or attributes into a common conceptual view.

Field unification preserves semantic continuity without requiring uniform schemas.

CoreQuarry Glossary

Information

Representations that describe observations, events, measurements, or assertions.

Information forms the material from which knowledge may be derived but is not itself knowledge.

Inquiry

The process of exploring artifacts in order to derive understanding.

Inquiry is broader than search or retrieval. It may involve discovery, composition, analysis, comparison, navigation, interpretation, and interaction.

Knowledge

Understanding derived through interpretation, context, provenance, communication, and inquiry.

Knowledge is not simply stored but continually constructed and refined.

Knowledge System

A system that preserves artifacts and enables inquiry across them while maintaining provenance, semantic continuity, and respect for authority.

Operational State

Information whose authoritative value changes over time and is maintained by an external operational system.

Examples include inventory levels, exchange rates, sensor readings, and transaction status.

Projection

A particular representation or view of an underlying artifact or structure.

Multiple projections may exist without altering the underlying essence.

CoreQuarry Glossary

Provenance

Information describing the origin, history, ownership, or transformation of an artifact or derived result.

Provenance supports transparency, traceability, and defensibility.

Representation

A concrete encoding or serialization of information.

Representations may evolve independently of the underlying structure or meaning they express.

Retrieval Unit

The portion of information returned in response to an inquiry.

The retrieval unit is determined by the inquiry and may range from a fragment to a composed collection of artifacts.

Semantic Continuity

The preservation of intended meaning despite changes in naming, schema, representation, or organizational structure.

Structure

The organization and relationships inherent in an artifact, independent of its external representation.

Structure provides the foundation for inquiry and reconstruction.

Trust

Confidence arising from visible provenance, explicit authority, and defensible reasoning rather than from unsupported certainty.