KNOWLEDGE BASE ARTICLE

Troubleshooting Questions and Answers: Not Configured, Missing Columns, Hidden Questions and Permissions

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Overview

Most problems with Questions and Answers come down to one of three things: the list (not connected, wrong columns, items unpublished), the permissions of the user, or a setting in the property pane. This article goes through the symptoms in the order in which they are usually met — from the first setup to daily use — with a check and a fix for each. It is written for the page editor and the site owner.

Start here: what does the web part show?

What you see	Go to
Not Configured on a published page	**Not Configured**
My list is not offered under **Existing List**	**The list is not offered**
There is nothing here yet. although the list has items	**Questions are not shown**
A question is in the list but not on the page	**Questions are not shown**
No **Ask a Question** button	**The button is missing**
Nothing here matches your search for a word that exists	**Search finds nothing**
The comment is not saved, or no input box	**Comments**
The answer shows **, – or # characters instead of formatting, or everything in one paragraph	**Markdown is not rendered**
The video shows as a link, or an empty frame	**Video**
No category tabs although **Category Filter** is on	**Category filter is missing**
Loading… that never ends, or an error text	**Loading never finishes**
The red message about the free trial	**The license message**

Not Configured

Symptom. Readers see *Not Configured — The web part still needs to be configured. Please open the page in edit mode and provide the necessary information.*

Cause. The web part has no connected list: it was added to the page and the page was published before a list was created or selected, or the page was copied from a template.

Fix. Edit the page, select the web part, and on its configuration screen either create a list with **New List** or select one with **Existing List**; then republish. See KB10218. How to Add and Configure the Questions and Answers Web Part.

The list is not offered under Existing List

Symptom. The **List** drop-down of the **Existing List** option does not contain the list you want to connect.

Cause. The drop-down shows only lists of the **current site** that have all the columns the web part needs, identified by their **internal names**: `Category`, `Answer`, `Link`, `VideoUrl`, `Contact`, `Order`. A list from another site, a hidden list or a list where one of these columns is missing or has a different internal name is not offered. Note that renaming a column in SharePoint changes its display name, not its internal name; a column created as *Video URL* with a space gets the internal name `Video_x0020_URL` and is not recognized.

Check. Open **List settings** and click each column; the internal name is the `Field=` part of the address bar.

Fix. Add the missing columns with exactly the internal names above (create them with the names `Category`, `Answer`, `Link`, `VideoUrl`, `Contact`, `Order` and the types listed in KB10382. Questions and Answers Web Part Settings Reference; the display name can be changed afterwards), plus a Yes/No column `Published`. Or let the web part create a new list with **New List** and move the content with **Edit in grid view** copy-and-paste. For a list on another site, add the web part to a page of that site instead.

Questions are not shown

Symptom. The page shows *There is nothing here yet.* although the list has items, or a particular question is missing.

Causes and fixes.

- **Published = No.** The web part shows only items with **Published** set to *Yes*. Submitted and newly created questions start as *No*. Open the list, create a view filtered on **Published = No** and publish what is ready.
- **The Published column is missing or has a different name.** A list connected before the column existed shows nothing. Add a Yes/No column with the internal name `Published`.
- **The reader has no access to the list.** The page is shared more widely than the list (broken inheritance). Readers need **Read** on the list.
- **A category tab is selected.** The reader has clicked a category tab; questions of other categories are hidden. Click **All**.
- **The list view threshold.** With more than 5,000 items and **Page Size = All**, SharePoint may refuse the query. Set a page size and add indexes to **Published** and the sort column (see KB10378. Searching the Knowledge Base and Paged Loading in Questions and Answers).

The Ask a Question button is missing

Symptom. The button is shown to some users and not to others, or to nobody.

Cause. The button appears only when both conditions hold: **Allow Users to Ask a Question** is *Enabled* in **Behavior**, and the user has the **Add Items** permission on the list — the web part reads the effective permissions of the user on the list and hides the button otherwise.

Fix. Check the switch in the property pane; then check the list permissions (**List settings** → **Permissions for this list**): the audience needs **Contribute** or a custom level with *Add Items*. Readers with **Read** never see the button. See KB10220. Letting Employees Ask Questions.

Search finds nothing

Symptom. *Nothing here matches your search* for a term that is clearly in the knowledge base.

Causes and fixes.

- **The term is in a place the search does not cover.** The search covers the question text, the answer text and the contact name — not attachments, comments, categories, link addresses or the detail link's description.
- **The question is unpublished.** Unpublished items are excluded from search as from the list.

- **Several words in a different order.** The words are searched as one phrase; *reset password* does not match *password reset*. Search for the one distinctive word.
- **The web part search is not the SharePoint search.** The results of the site's search box and of the web part's search box differ by design: the list is excluded from search crawling, and the web part queries the list directly.

Comments

Symptom. A comment typed in the web part is not saved, or the **Comments** block shows no input box.

Causes and fixes.

- **Commenting is disabled for the list** (**List settings** → **Advanced settings** → **Comments** → **No**). Existing comments are shown, new ones cannot be added. Set it to *Yes*.
- **The user has Read only.** Adding a comment needs the right to contribute to the list; the box is shown, but SharePoint rejects the comment. Grant **Contribute** or accept that readers cannot comment.
- **Show Comments is Hide.** The whole block is hidden by the property pane; set it to *Show* in **Show/Hide**.
- **Sorry, something went wrong while retrieving comments.** A temporary error while loading the comments of a question; expand the question again or reload the page.

Markdown is not rendered

Symptom. The answer shows the Markdown characters (`**text**`, `- item`, `## heading`) literally, or a list typed on several lines appears as one paragraph.

Cause. The answer was entered with the **formatting toolbar** of the SharePoint item form, which stores HTML. The web part removes HTML tags and renders the remaining text as Markdown; formatting from the toolbar is lost, and line breaks made inside the rich-text editor may not survive as Markdown line breaks.

Fix. Type the Markdown as plain text — asterisks, hyphens and hash signs — without the toolbar. For a reliable result, set the **Answer** column to plain text: **List settings** → **Columns** → **Answer** → **Specify the type of text to allow** → **Plain text**. The web part needs no rich text. Markdown basics are in KB10380. Rich Answers in Questions and Answers: Markdown, Video, Attachments, Detail Links and Contacts.

Video

Symptom. The video is shown as a hyperlink instead of a player, or the player is an

empty frame.

Causes and fixes.

- **The address is not a supported one.** Only YouTube (`watch?v=`, `youtu.be`, `shorts`, `embed`), Vimeo (`vimeo.com/<number>`) and direct video files (`.mp4`, `.webm`, `.ogg`, `.ogv`, `.m4v`) are embedded; everything else — a Microsoft Stream page, a SharePoint page with a video, a learning platform — is shown as a link by design. For a video stored in SharePoint, use the direct link to the file.
- **The player is blocked.** The network or a browser extension blocks `youtube.com` or `player.vimeo.com`; the frame stays empty. Host the video in SharePoint instead.
- **Video is on Hide.** Switch **Video** to *Show* in **Show/Hide**.
- **The file cannot be played by the browser.** A `.mov` or `.avi` file is shown as a link; convert it to MP4.

Category filter is missing

Symptom. Category Filter is *Enabled*, but no tabs appear.

Cause. The tabs are shown only when the **loaded** questions have at least two different categories. With one category there is nothing to filter; with paged loading, the second category may be on a later page.

Fix. Assign categories to the questions, or raise **Page Size**, or sort by **Name** so that categories mix on the first page.

Loading never finishes

Symptom. *Loading...* stays on screen, or the web part shows *The following error occurred:* with a technical message.

Causes and fixes.

- **The connected list was deleted or renamed.** The web part remembers the list by ID; a deleted list produces an error. Restore the list from the recycle bin, or add the web part again and connect another list.
- **The user has no access to the list.** See above.
- **A temporary network problem.** Reload the page.
- **The 5,000-item threshold.** See **Questions are not shown**.

If the error message mentions a column, compare the list's columns with the required internal names.

The license message

Symptom. A red message bar *We hope you enjoyed your free trial. Buy it now to keep it working.* with a **Buy It** link.

Cause. The free trial of the product has ended, or no subscription is assigned to this tenant.

Fix. See KB10365. Why Does a Vitextra Web Part Show "We Hope You Enjoyed Your Free Trial"? License Messages and Fixes. Nothing in the configuration of the web part or the list causes this message.

Still not solved

Write to Vitextra support with the exact message, the **Version** and **Tenant** values from the **About** group of the property pane, a screenshot of the list's columns (**List settings**) and whether the problem occurs for all users or some. Deep-link problems (`?questionId=N`) are easiest to reproduce when you include the link.