

# Alterra.ai FAQ search API

This document describes the API to Alterra FAQ custom search engine and respective support chatbot.

It's a chatbot that can answer straightforward questions. It operates on top of a FAQ file. If the answer to the question is in the FAQ it shall be able to answer it.

In a sense, it's a FAQ search engine wrapped in a bot. It returns 3 top search results, in the order of relevancy.

Using this API, third-party developers (aka clients) may build their own virtual support agents, embed the functionality in site search, pair it up with live support agents, etc.

To utilize this custom search engine the client shall first make its FAQ available to Alterra, for indexing. The document(s) may be FAQ, Q&A or help file(s), canned answer set, knowledge base, online user manual, etc. To arrange it, please contact [info@alterra.ai](mailto:info@alterra.ai)

Alterra is a natural language processing engine. Clients may access it from a variety of i/o conduits, such as:

- Messenger bots (Facebook, Slack, Skype, etc.);
- Live chat on their websites and in apps (Intercom, Salesforce Desk, Zendesk, LiveChat, etc.);
- SMS;
- Email;
- Telephone;
- Voice assistants (with the help from third-party voice recognition engines);
- Free text NLP search on their websites and in apps, etc.

To request an API access key please contact [info@alterra.ai](mailto:info@alterra.ai)

## API transport and endpoints

The API calls are done with JSON over HTTPS protocol using <https://alterra.ai/api/faq> endpoint. The client should issue a POST request with JSON-formatted body. The answer is also JSON-formatted.

## JSON request format

The request data format is a JSON object with the following fields:

Field name	Type	Required?	Comment
client_key	string	Y	API access key assigned at sign-up

Field name	Type	Required?	Comment
version	string	Y	Version of the protocol used (current version is v1)
session_id	string	Y	ID of the conversation (see note below)
timestamp	int	Y	The time of the event, as UNIX timestamp
message	string	Y	The message sent by user

Note: `session_id` is a string assigned by the calling software that uniquely defines the conversation. Can be a user id, or a string assigned randomly at the start of conversation.

## JSON reply format

Alterra.ai's replies are JSON objects with the fields described below.

### API v1

API v1 returns matched FAQ articles matched by the user's message.

Field name	Type	Always present?	Comment
status	ENUM	Y	Processing status (currently "OK" or "ERR")
error	string	N	Error message, in case status is "ERR"
search_results	object	Y	Search results (currently, matched FAQ articles)

`search_results` is an object with a single field `results`, which is a list of objects. The individual result object has these fields:

Field name	Type	Always present?	Comment
id	int	Y	ID of the FAQ article
title	string	Y	Article title
answer	string	Y	Article text