

Joomla!® 1.7

Beginner's Guide

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written by

cocoate

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Andreas Kölln, Angie Radtke, Henk van Cann, Jen Kramer

Joomla! 1.7

Beginner's Guide

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About the Book

This book, as every book, has chapters, an outline, many screenshots and it covers the newest technology available in the "Joomla!verse".

It is based on the successful Joomla! 1.6 - Beginner's Guide and extended with more chapters. All the existing chapters are reworked and new screenshots were taken, where it was necessary.

It is useful for readers, advertisers, authors, translators and of course the Joomla! community because:

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There's a lot in the book to discover!

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IT'S COLLABORATIVE WORK

Four additional authors besides me wrote chapters!

Thank you:

Angie Radtke - *Der Auftritt*¹. Chapter: The Beez Template

Andreas Kölln - *TC4J - Templateclub4Joomla*²: Chapter: Must have Extensions

¹ <http://www.der-auftritt.de/>

² <http://www.tc4j.com/>

Henk van Cann - *2Value*³. Chapter: Earning respect and money with Joomla

Jen Kramer - *4Web Inc*⁴. Chapter: A Joomla! 1.7 Website from Scratch

IT'S MULTILINGUAL

The book will be available in three more languages.

SPANISH - JOOMLA! 1.7 - GUÍA PARA PRINCIPIANTES

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POLISH - JOOMLA! 1.7 - PRZEWODNIK DLA POCZĄTKUJĄCYCH

The idea of the polish translation was born in a Hotel in Ciescyn, Poland and now it is developing in a very good way!

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³ <http://www.2value.nl/>

⁴ <http://www.joomla4web.com/>

⁵ <http://cocoate.com/es/node/8065>

⁶ <http://cocoate.com/de/node/9268>

⁷ <http://cocoate.com/pl/node/8587>

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Welcome to Joomla!. It is a free system for creating websites. It is an open source project, which, like most open source projects, is constantly in motion. It is unpredictable, sometimes indescribable, partially controversial, quite often very sexy, at times a little sleepy and provincial. Nevertheless, or perhaps because of these reasons, it has been extremely successful for five years now and is popular with millions of users worldwide.

The word Joomla! is a derivative of the word Jumla from the African language of Swahili and means "all together. "

The Project Joomla! is the result of a heated discussion between the Mambo Foundation, which was founded in August 2005, and its then-development team. Joomla! is a development of the successful system Mambo. Joomla! is used all over the world for simple homepages and for complex corporate websites as well. It is easy to install, easy to manage and very reliable.

The Joomla! team has organized and reorganized itself throughout the last five years.

- From 2005 to 2009, Joomla! 1.0 was further developed up to version 1.0.15 and that development was officially laid off in September 2009.
- From 2005 until now, Joomla 1.5 is still being developed, was introduced as a stable version in January 2008, and will be officially laid off in April 2012.
- From 2008 until 2011, Joomla 1.6 was developed. A stable version has been available since January 2011. The end of life for Joomla! 1.6 will be the release date of Joomla! 1.7
- Joomla! 1.7 will be released in July 2011 and it will pave the road for the next Joomla! long term release 1.8 or 2.0

The users of the Joomla! system remained faithful. Many transferred their website from Mambo to Joomla! and they have learned a lot over the years.

Many users have climbed aboard in the last few years but there are still people in the world who do not know about the system. Joomla!, together with Drupal and Wordpress, is the most used open source web content management system in the world.

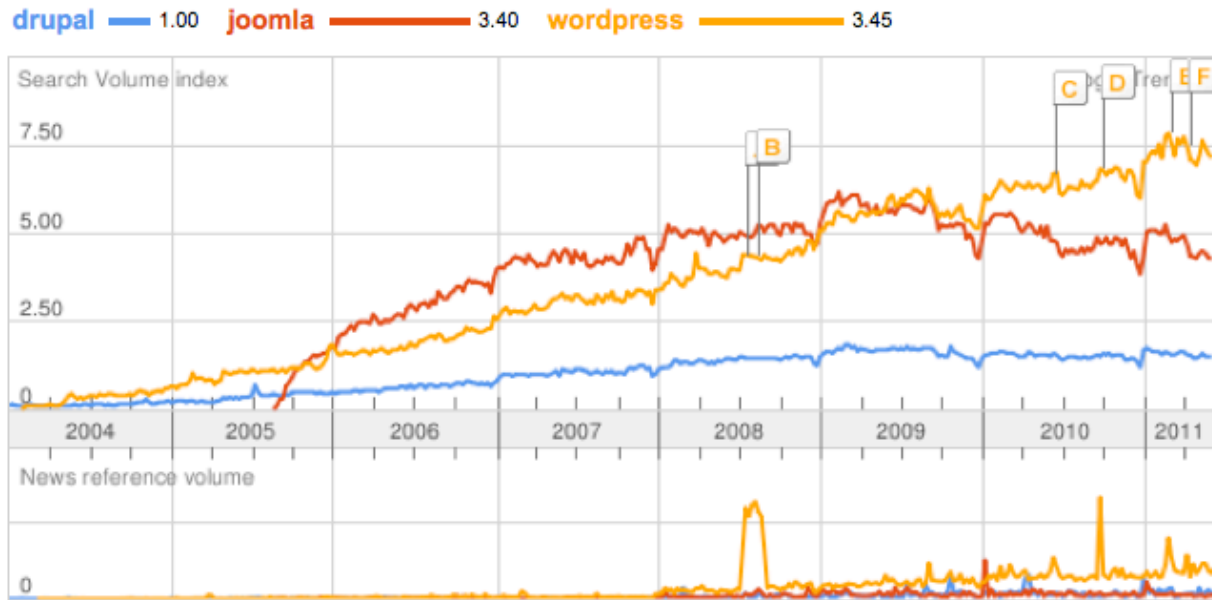


Figure 1: Google Trend 2011-06-20 worldwide Drupal, Joomla!, WordPress

In Figure 1, Joomla! and Wordpress are on the same average level according to Google search volume trend. Joomla! and Wordpress are searched three times as often as Drupal. However, the search volume for Joomla! has been declining since 2010. It was time for Joomla! to start reflecting with the release of the Joomla! 1.6 version in January 2011 and Joomla 1.7 in July 2011.

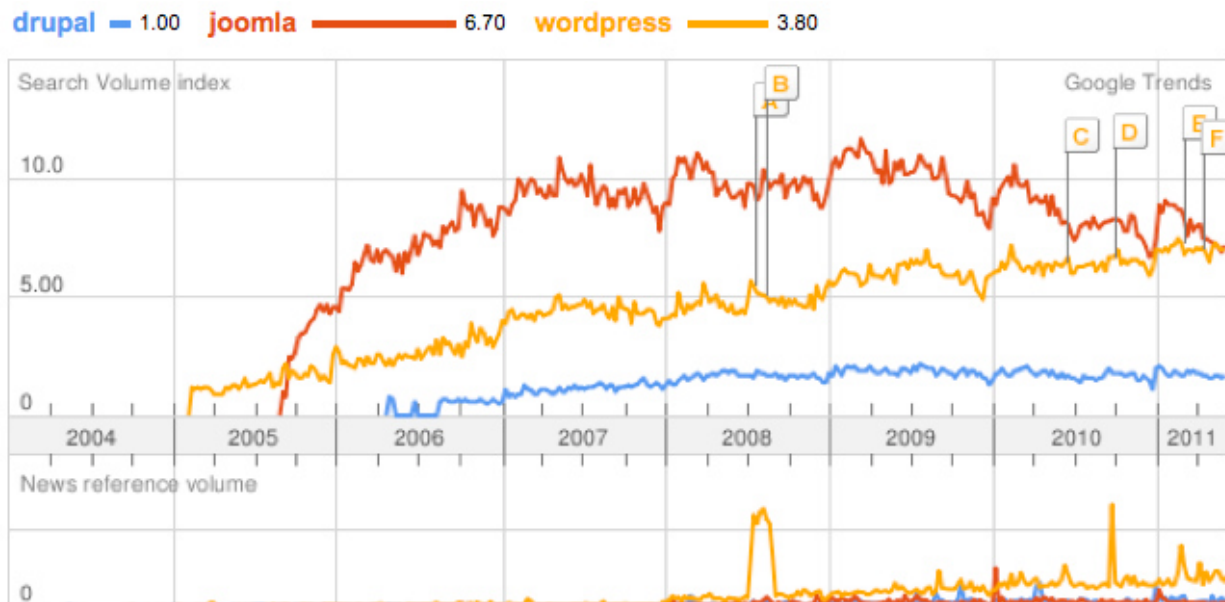


Figure 2: Google Trend 2011-06-20 Germany - Drupal, Joomla!, WordPress

Compared to the world average the situation in e.g. Germany is different (*Figure 2*). Joomla! has almost twice as large of a search volume as WordPress and WordPress almost four times as much as Drupal.

Here are a few statistics from Google Trend (Table 1):

Country	Drupal	Joomla!	Wordpress
Germany	1	6.7	3.8
France	1	5.5	3.45
Italy	1	6.4	3.6
Poland	1	8.3	3.1
Spain	1	4.05	3.85
Switzerland	1	9.5	3.4
UK	1	2.60	3.65
USA	1	1.55	3.25
China	1	1.4	5

Table 1 Google Trend - Drupal, Joomla!, Wordpress

There are significant national differences in the use of content management systems. In Germany, for example, TYPO3 also plays a role. The search volume is comparable to Joomla!. In the U.S., the ratio Joomla! - TYPO3 is 1.0 to 0.01, which indicates an impact more or less not measurable.

In July 2011, 2.7 % of the entire web is powered by Joomla!®

The range of Joomla! websites goes from very simple homepages to complex business applications and projects based on the Joomla! Framework. What makes Joomla! so successful, and the ways in which you can use it, will be described in this book.

WHO AM I?

My name is Hagen Graf, I'm 46 years old, and I live in *Fitou*⁹, France. I am married to the woman of my dreams and have four daughters.

My work consists of many different activities such as teaching, advising, listening, testing, programming, understanding structures, developing new applications, questioning, and always trying something new.

⁸ w3techs.com/technologies/overview/content_management/all

⁹ <http://goo.gl/maps/3dU6>

Actually, my work can be done completely online but sometimes clients may have reservations about fully online projects, which is why I am on the road a lot. Being on the road means meeting clients in different countries with different languages and cultures, long car, bus or train rides as well as very short response times to customer inquiries by e-mail, Facebook messages and tweets.

This way of working has implications for what I once used to call "the office".

I need to be able to have access from anywhere in the world to my e-mails, pictures, videos, tweets, and documents. My office is located where I am.

WHO ARE YOU?

Of course, I do not know exactly what you do but many people whom I have worked with, work in a way similar to myself. Employees of larger companies however, for various reasons, often cannot or may not work as flexibly. Your own experience with computers is probably similar to mine. Many of us started with an older PC and a Windows system at school or at home, and then got to know from experience the harsh reality of office applications, data loss, insufficient memory, and hard drive and printer configuration adventures. The wonderful relationships between these things have been changed with the user-centred way workings of the Web 2.0 and the use of smart phones, but this does not necessarily make it easier.

If you do not love messing with passion at night with your operating system or telephone or sorting your photos and music, and moving them all from one device to another, then you are probably just like me - happy when your devices and applications are working, when you can access your data on the Internet and all is working smoothly. If you work from a home office, a smooth work environment becomes particularly important. Non-functioning soft- and hardware can quickly turn your situation into a nightmare.

I distinguish between the following types of users:

- **Visitors:** They visit a website and they do not care much about the system you used for creating the site.
- **Users:** They use the website. They create content using pre-defined procedures.
- **Website Designers or Integrators:** They install a Joomla! site on a server, create categories, content, links and menu modules, configure templates and languages, are all-rounders and usually have the sole responsibility for the website.
- **CSS Designers:** They often like to work exclusively with files that have the extension `.css`.
- **HTML Designers:** They give CSS Designers the foundation they need for their work. In Joomla!, they create the so-called template overrides.
- **Developers:** They know the programming languages PHP and JavaScript and like to use them. They enhance the Joomla! core with additional functions.
- **Architects:** They think about security, speed and code quality.

The website designer plays a special role in this list. He usually has to cover all other roles, which constitutes a real challenge. As I am writing this book, I often find myself thinking about the website designer.

A company, an institution, a club, an organization, yes, probably everyone, needs a web presence that is user-friendly and flexible. A presence - one that develops over time, can easily be changed via a web browser; a presence that replaces your filing cabinet and leather address book; a presence that can communicate with different devices and can be extended easily.

I assume your website is already the place where you explain what you do or what your company does. This is your place where you maintain your customer relations 24 hours per day, seven days a week.

Your website probably contains a collection of applications and data summarizing your activities. Your site should also contain interfaces to allow other applications to use them.

Until a few years, the creation of a website was a difficult thing to do. While you did not have to be a renowned specialist, a combination of perseverance and having fun with what you are doing were necessary to produce appealing results. You had to create static HTML pages in an HTML editor and then upload them via file transfer protocol to a server. To create even the simplest interactivity such as a contact form or a forum, you had to learn a programming language.

It is more than understandable that many people did not take this hardship on themselves and handed over the creation of a website to a web agency or did not even start the project in the first place.

Thanks to Facebook and kits such as Google Sites, creating simple web pages has become relatively easy but if you want something unique, you should become familiar with a content management system.

Joomla! offers everything you need to create your own, individual website.

WHAT IS THIS BOOK ABOUT?

First of all, it is about Joomla! and how to use it.

Joomla! is a tool with lots of possibilities and you can use the system in a huge variety of configurations, depending on your ideas and wishes.

In order to allow comfortable access, I have structured the book as follows:

1. This Introduction
2. Showcase
3. Installation
4. Structures and Terms
5. What's New in Joomla! 1.7?
6. Managing Content

7. How to Create an 'About Us' Page
8. A Typical Article
9. Media Manager
10. Contact Form
11. Status, Trash and Check Ins
12. Structure Your Content with Categories
13. Website and Content Configuration
14. Templates
15. Navigation
16. Users and Permissions
17. Extension Management
18. Core Extensions
 1. Banners
 2. Contacts
 3. Messages
 4. Newsfeeds
 5. Redirect
 6. Search
 7. Weblinks
 8. Mass Mail Users
19. Modules
20. Plug-Ins
21. Working with Templates
 1. Create Your Own Style
 2. Customizing Existing Templates
 3. Overrides
 4. Create a New Template using Atomic
22. The Beez Template (Angie Radtke)
23. Search Engine Optimization
24. Multi-Language Websites

- 25. Must have extensions (Andreas Kölln)
- 26. Upgrade from Older Versions
- 27. A Joomla! Website from Scratch (Jen Kramer)
- 28. Earning respect and Money with Joomla! (Henk van Cann)
- 29. Resources?

Although you are a beginner, you will be able to manage your own Joomla! website via a web browser. If you are somehow familiar with HTML, CSS and image editing, you will be able to customize a template for your website.

ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS?

Don't hesitate! Of course, I can't deliver technical support. The Joomla! forums provide a wealth of knowledge and you will definitely find answers to your questions there. If you have comments or questions about the book, however, please feel free to leave them.

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Chapter 2

Showcase

What do websites look like when they were created with Joomla?

This question can't be answered easily as most websites are based on the Joomla! software, but the design of the website is created by an agency and then "transformed" into a Joomla! template. Therefore, the exterior of a website can be deceiving. Nevertheless, here are some screenshots to give you an idea.

THE EIFFEL TOWER

Well, probably you know this building (*Figure 1*)!



Figure 1: The Eiffel Tower

Well, probably you know this building!

Website: <http://tour-eiffel.fr/>

Creator: Mairie de Paris (<http://paris.fr/>)

THE HOWOLDIES

Launching soon, hopefully end of July 2011! Somuga, a Basque animation company, constructed this site with their original characters to demonstrate animation in a completely open source environment (*Figure 2*).



Figure 2: THE HOWOLDIES

Built with Joomla 1.6, HTML5, and in three languages (Basque, Spanish, and English)

This site demonstrates some of the latest technologies integrated with Joomla!

Website: coming soon

Creator: <http://www.4webinc.com/>

3000+ GOVERNMENT WEBSITES BUILT WITH JOOMLA!

JoomlaGov is a showcase for Government sites powered by Joomla! around the world. More than 200 countries are represented and, one month after its launch at 'J and Beyond' 2011, it contains more than 3,000 sites.

This site is a great example of how the Joomla! community¹⁰ can collaborate, to highlight the qualities of the Joomla! CMS. For instance, the website of the Estonian Presidency¹¹ is well worth a look (*Figure 3*).

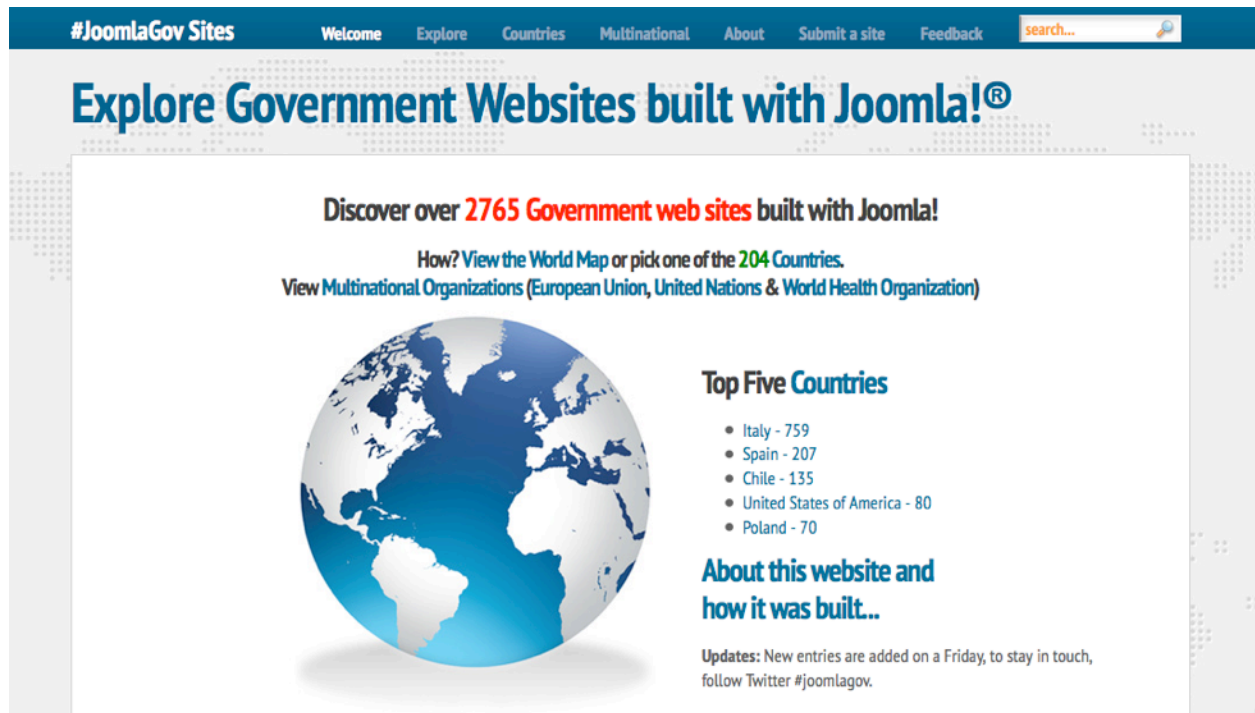


Figure 3: JoomlaGov

Website built using Joomla!, K2 & Google Maps (API version 3)

Website: <http://www.joomlagov.info>

Creator: <http://raramuridesign> & <http://piezoworks.be>

ECOMMERCE

A danish online shop based on Joomla! and the RedShop component (*Figure 4*).

¹⁰ <http://joomlagov.info/about>

¹¹ <http://www.president.ee/>

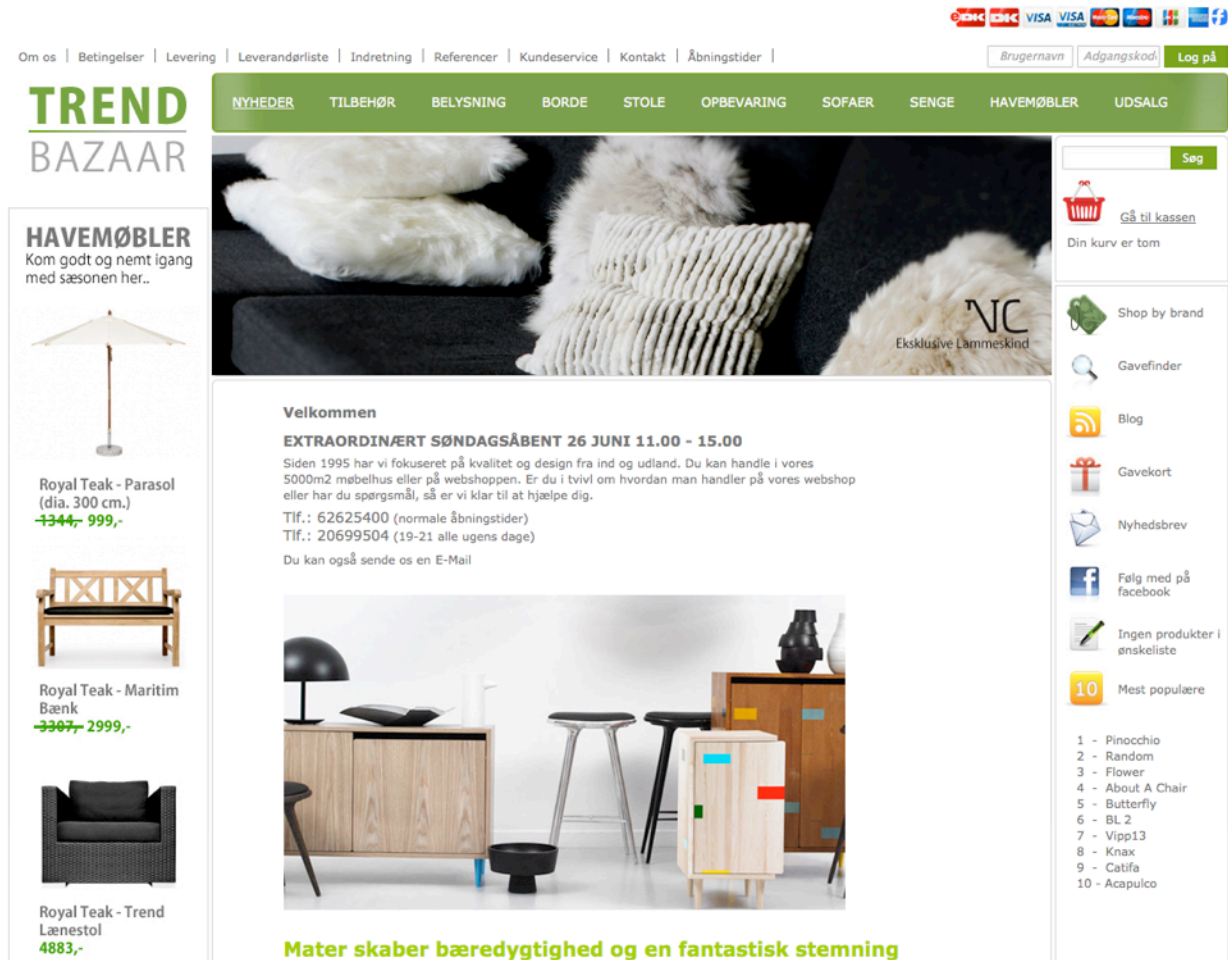


Figure 4: Trend Bazaar

Website built using Joomla!, K2 & Google Maps (API version 3)

Website: <http://www.trendbazaar.dk>

Creator: <http://redweb.dk>

COMPANY SITE

This website is a 'typical' company site. Joomla! is perfect for these kind of websites (Figure 5).

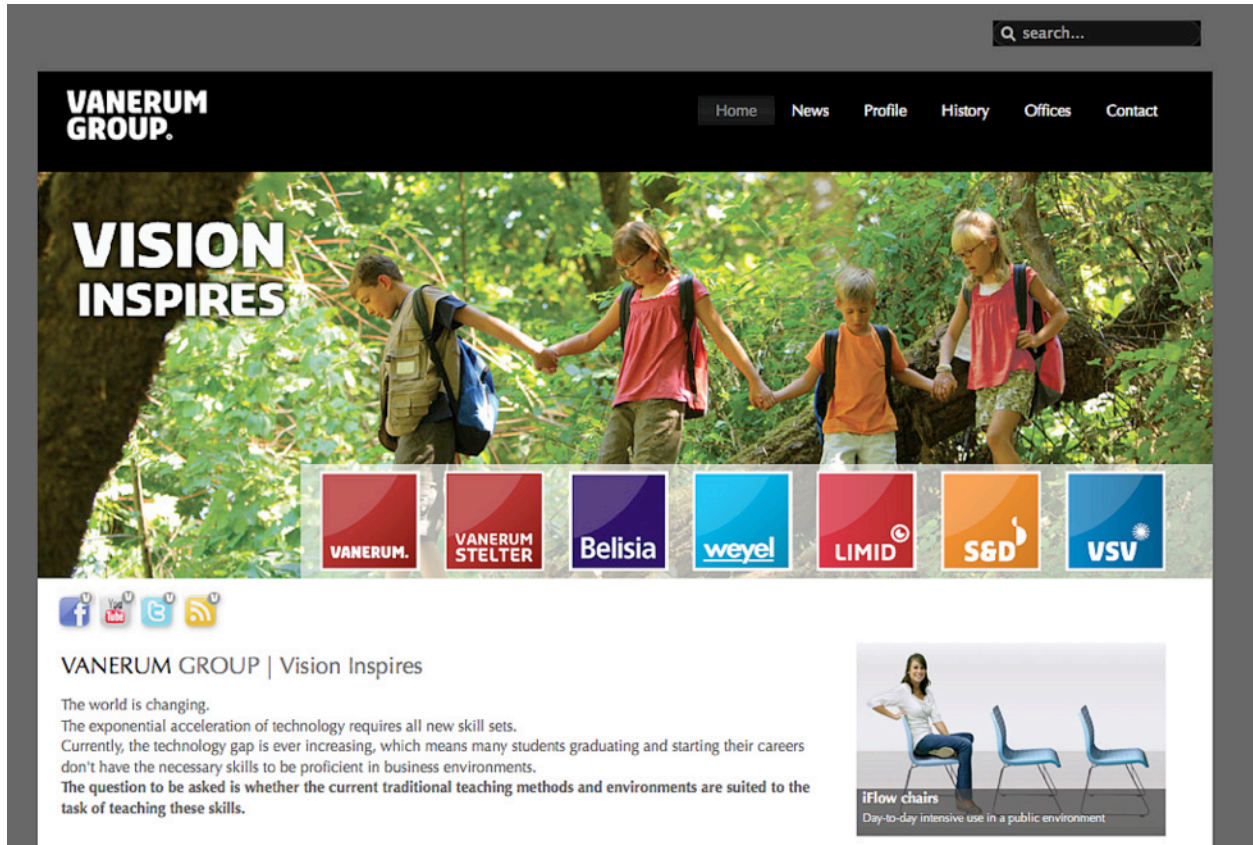


Figure 3: Vanerumgroup

All sites of Vanerumgroup have been made with Joomla! 1.5. Challenges were the multiple language support, the synchronisation of products between the different site (still is) and the different content by region (solved by metamod)

Website: <http://www.vanerumgroup.com>

Creator: <http://5aces.be>

AND?

These websites look how websites are supposed to look. :-)
If I had not told you that they were created with Joomla!, you probably would not have noticed it consciously.

HOW TO FIND JOOMLA! SITES?

I will show a few ways to find websites made with Joomla!.

joomla.org

Just have a look at the project site! I found the sites featured above in the Joomla! Showcase ¹². You will find 2,000 websites sorted by category. There is a site of the month, an overview with top-rated sites, and much more (*Figure 4*).



Figure 4: Joomla! Showcase

Google

¹² <http://community.joomla.org/showcase/>

You can search for the term `com_content`¹³. The component "content" uses this term in the URL of the page. Nowadays, this kind of searching is not really effective because of the various search engine optimized URLs' but the result is still impressive.

CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE MORE CLOSELY

If you are on a website and want to know whether it was created with Joomla!, have a look at the source code. In the header section, you should find this line:

```
<meta name="generator" content="Joomla! - Open  
Source Content Management" />
```

You can also just type the URL of the link to the administration area:

```
http://example.com/administrator
```

Here the example of the Eiffel tower site:¹⁴:



Administration of the Guggenheim Museum

GO AHEAD AND ASK YOUR FRIENDS

I tweeted¹⁵

```
I want YOUR site :) Looking for 5+ great Joomla!  
site examples for the showcase chapter  
cocoate.com/j17/showcase plz reply a link+RT
```

¹³ http://www.google.de/search?q=com_content

¹⁴ <http://www.tour-eiffel.fr/administrator/>

¹⁵ <http://twitter.com/hagengraf/status/83149809338417152>

and promand promptly received the links for the sites you can see above!

ANY OTHER IDEAS?

Do you know any other ways to of detecting Joomla! sites? Feel free to leave comments¹⁶.

¹⁶ <http://cocoate.com/node/8525>

Advertisement



redSHOP is one of the most feature rich e-commerce solutions for Joomla! today.

With CCK in mind, redSHOP aims to be the easy and accessible "Swiss knife" of Joomla! e-commerce.



Highly customizable

Gain full control of your shop through the configuration. Change the way your shop works with a click of a button.



Simple template system

Create sophisticated templates in no time, utilizing a simple tag system. Supports the Joomla overriding system.



Major payment gateways

redSHOP supports major payment gateways such as Paypal, Sagepay, 2Checkout, Authorize.net and more...



Custom product fields

Make your products personal with custom fields. No more hardcoded product fields.



Unlimited everything

redSHOP supports unlimited products, categories, custom fields and more. there is no restrictions.



Newsletters and mails

Communicate with the shoppers using segmented newsletters and action emails. Boost your sales.



SEO optimization

SEF url support, custom meta, keywords and pagetitles for individual products and categories. Dynamic keyword generation via tags.



Various shipping options

redSHOP supports various carrier services such as UPS, USPS, fedEX, Norwegian posten(Bring) and more..



Attributes, and more...

Utilize attributes, accessory products, related product and child products. Give the customers something to choose from.



Import/Export

Import and export your products through CSV and XML. redSHOP also has a Virtuemart migration tool.



Free to use

redSHOP is free to use. Utilizing the free payment gateways, modules and plugins you will experience redSHOP with no charge at all.



Chapter 3

Installation

Thanks to the web installer, Joomla! can be installed in only a few minutes.

In order to install Joomla! on your local PC, it is necessary to set up your "own internet", for which you'll need a consisting supported browser, a web server, a PHP environment and as well a Joomla! supported database system. We call this a LAMP stack¹⁷ (or XAMP) and a client server system. The Joomla! files will be copied to this system and configured with the Joomla! web installer.

MINIMUM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS:

- an installed and functioning web server, like Apache or Microsoft IIS, version 1.13.19.
- the PHP scripting language, version 5.2.4. PHP support for MySQL and Zlib must be compiled into PHP. Zlib is a library that allows PHP to read file packages that are compressed with the ZIP-based technique.
- the MySQL database system, version 3.23.x or higher, for Unicode character sets MySQL 4.1.x.

INSTALLATION VARIANTS

You need all the components mentioned above to install a Joomla! system for yourself. PC, browser, and Internet connection are usually available. There are a number of options for web server, PHP interpreter, and database. You can:

- set the system up locally on your PC
- set the system up on a server in a company's Intranet
- rent a virtual server from a provider
- rent or purchase a server from a provider (with root access)

You can also have the web server and database located on computers that are physically separated from each other.

You can also, of course, use different:

- brands of web servers
- Versions of PHP interpreters
- Versions of MySQL databases

¹⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LAMP_%28software_bundle%29

And on top of that, you can install and operate all these components on various operating systems.

This freedom in choice of resources can sometimes confuse a layman. Therefore, we will discuss a few typical scenarios.

LOCAL TEST ENVIRONMENT

If you are at home or in your office, for example, and want to set up a Joomla! website, you may use any of the following operating systems.

Windows Operating System

For a Windows operating system you can use either of two web servers:.

You take a pre-configured package (XAMPP), unpack it on your computer, and everything you need is there (<http://apachefriends.org>).

Linux Operating System

Here it depends on the distribution version you have. All the distributions allow simple installation (with a click of the mouse) of the Apache, PHP, and MySQL packages. At times, depending on distribution, they may already be pre-installed. So you can use the programs contained in the distribution or a preconfigured package (XAMPP); extract it on your computer and everything you need is there (<http://apachefriends.org>).

Mac OS X Operating System

In Mac OS X operating system, you have a default web server (Apache) in your system that you have to activate, but unfortunately not PHP and no MySQL.

So you can use the installed Apache web server and install the missing software or the pre-configured XAMPP package for Mac OS X. Another complete package by the name of MAMP is also very popular with the Mac OS X environment (<http://www.mamp.info>).

PRODUCTION ENVIRONMENT

You have several options here as well.

Rented Virtual Server

You rent a web-space package with database, PHP support, and often also your domain name from a provider. In this case you have a functional environment and you can install your Joomla! into it. Consult your provider as to the version choices (PHP, MySQL). Sometimes providers offer Joomla! pre-installed with various templates. If this is the case, all you have to do is activate Joomla! with a click of the mouse and it is ready for you.

Your Own Server

You rent a server from a provider and install the operating system of your choice. You are the administrator of the system and you can work on it, just like on your PC at home.

Before you venture into the wilderness of the Internet, you should first practice on your local computer. This has the advantage that there are no connection fees, it is very fast, and you can practice at a leisurely pace.

You may even have a small local network at home where you can install Joomla! on one computer and access it from another.

Remember that there are probably more current versions on the respective project sites on the Internet.

STUMBLING STONES

This topic is very complex because there is a vast number of providers and an even greater number of installed web server, PHP, MySQL versions and web space management tools. Crunchpoints during the installation often consist of:

- an activated PHP Safe Mode, preventing you to upload files,
- 'forbidden' rewrite paths with the Apache web server because the so-called Apache Rewrite Engine (`mod_rewrite`) is not activated,
- the directory permissions on Linux and OSX, which are set differently than in Windows.

Basically, the easiest way that almost always works, is the following:

- Download the current file package from joomla.org to your home PC and unzip everything into a temporary directory.
- Load the unpacked files via FTP onto your rented server or to the directory of your local installation. The files must be installed in the public directory. These directories are usually called *htdocs*, *public_html* or *html*. If there already are other installations in that directory, you can specify a sub directory in which your Joomla! files should be installed. Many web hosts allows you to link your rented domain name to a directory.
- You have to find out the name of your database. In most cases, one or more databases are included in your web hosting package. Sometimes, the names of the user, database and password are already given; sometimes you have to set them up first. Usually you can do this in a browser-based configuration interface. You will need the database access information for Joomla!'s web installer.

JOOMLA! WEB INSTALLER

Download Joomla! 1.7 at joomla.org¹⁸ and unpack the files into your root folder of the web server (e.g.: */htdocs*). From now on, everything is going to go really fast because the Joomla! web installer is working for you. Go to URL `http://localhost/`.

Step 1 – Selecting a language

¹⁸ <http://www.joomla.org/download.html>

The web installer appears with a selection of languages. Choosing the language is the first of seven installation steps. Set the desired language, and click the Next button (*Figure 1*).

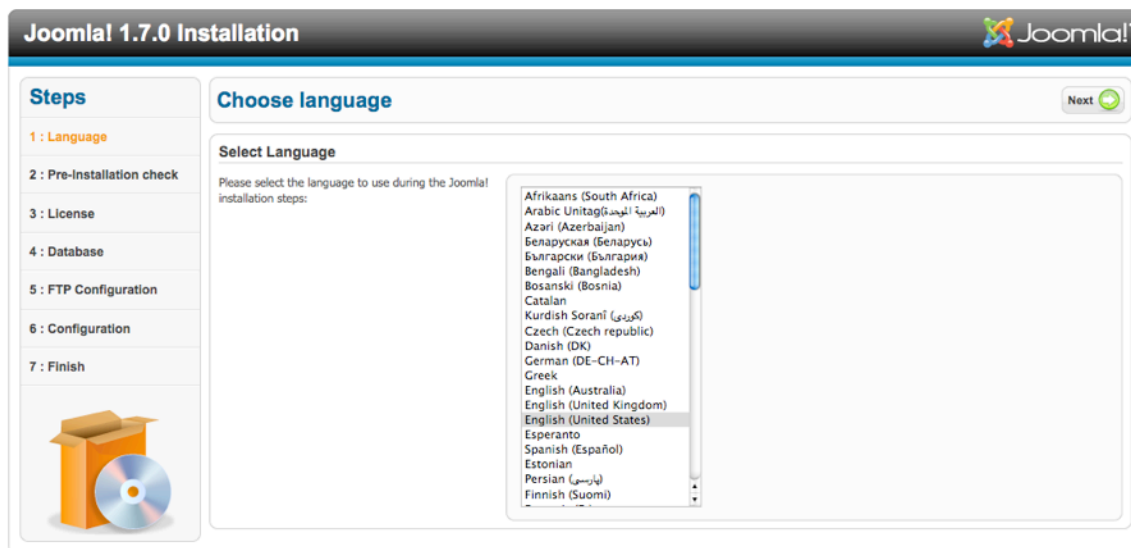


Figure 1: Installer – Select language

Step 2 – Installation check

The *Installation check* (*Figure 2*) should help you verify whether your server environment is suitable for the installation of Joomla! or not.

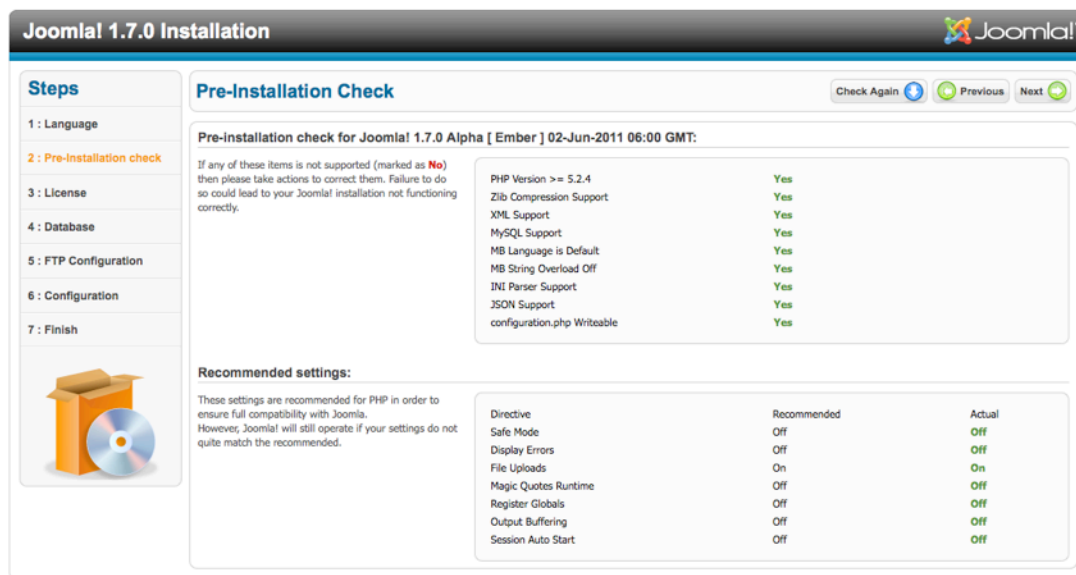


Figure 2: Installer – Installation check

It's a good sign if you see mostly green test results. Depending on your configuration, there can be differences. The Joomla! Installer considers the configuration settings of the web server (in our case Apache), PHP, and the operating system. When using Unix Systems (Linux, Mac OS X), you have to pay attention to *file permissions*. This is particularly important for the file

configuration.php. This file will be generated at the end of the installation with your personal values. If the installer can not write in the folder, Joomla! can not create the file and the installation will fail. In this case, try to configure the rights and then click the button *repeat check*. Then, click the *Next* button and you will get to the step *license*.

Step 3 – License

Each software product is somehow licensed. Joomla! is licensed according to the GNU General Public License, version 2.0 (*Figure 3*).

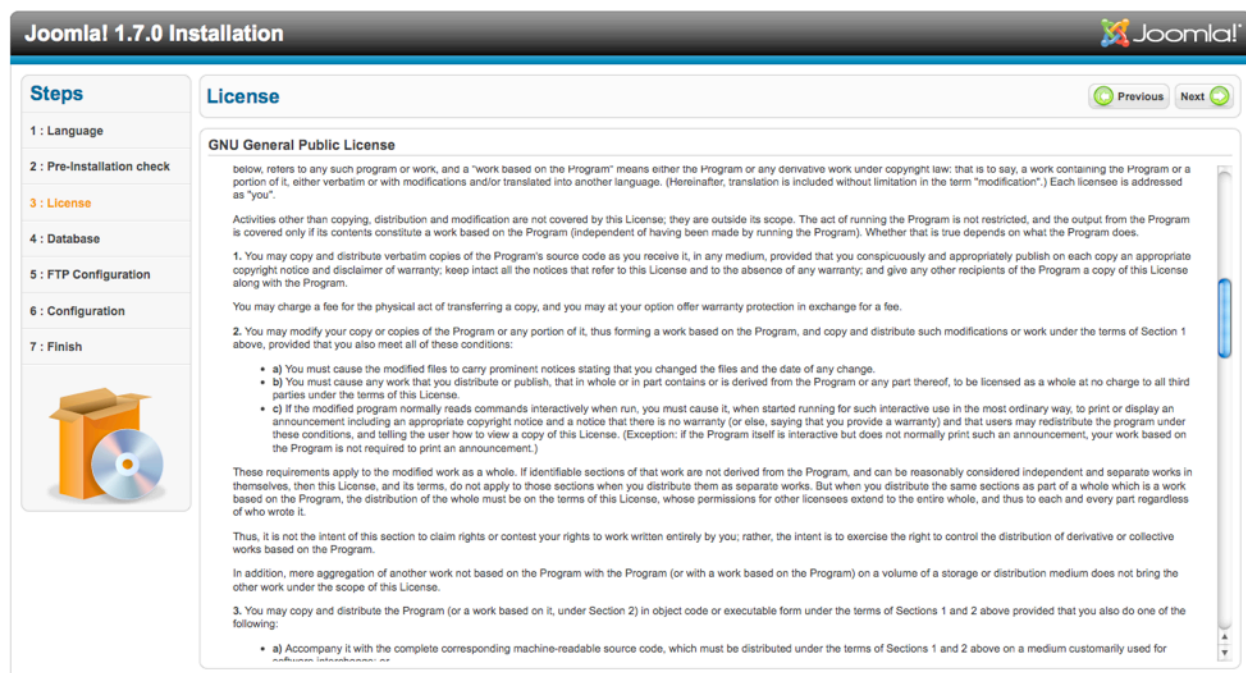
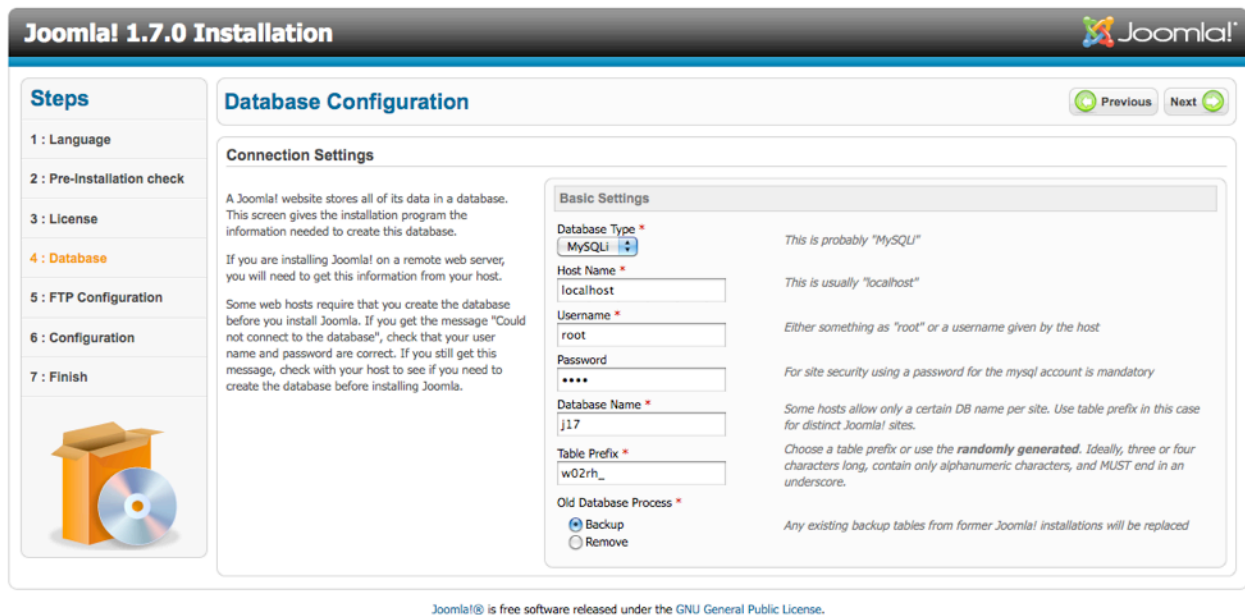


Figure 3: Installer – License

Step 4 – Database

In the fourth step *database configuration*, your data base parameters will be requested (*Figure 4*). You can create any number of databases in your local server environment. You have a MySQL user with the name *root*. The user root is the MySQL administrator and can, therefore, do everything in your MySQL system. The password depends on your server environment (no password is needed with XAMPP, with MAMP the password is root).



Joomla! 1.7.0 Installation

Steps

- 1 : Language
- 2 : Pre-Installation check
- 3 : License
- 4 : Database**
- 5 : FTP Configuration
- 6 : Configuration
- 7 : Finish

Database Configuration

Connection Settings

A Joomla! website stores all of its data in a database. This screen gives the installation program the information needed to create this database.

If you are installing Joomla! on a remote web server, you will need to get this information from your host.

Some web hosts require that you create the database before you install Joomla!. If you get the message "Could not connect to the database", check that your user name and password are correct. If you still get this message, check with your host to see if you need to create the database before installing Joomla!.

Basic Settings

Database Type *
MySQL This is probably "MySQL"

Host Name *
localhost This is usually "localhost"

Username *
root Either something as "root" or a username given by the host

Password *
**** For site security using a password for the mysql account is mandatory

Database Name *
j17 Some hosts allow only a certain DB name per site. Use table prefix in this case for distinct Joomla! sites.

Table Prefix *
w02rh_ Choose a table prefix or use the **randomly generated**. Ideally, three or four characters long, contain only alphanumeric characters, and **MUST** end in an underscore.

Old Database Process *
☒ Backup Any existing backup tables from former Joomla! installations will be replaced
☐ Remove

Joomla!® is free software released under the GNU General Public License.

Figure 4: Installer – database configuration

Enter the following values into your local installation:

computer name: localhost

user name: root

password: [only you know that]

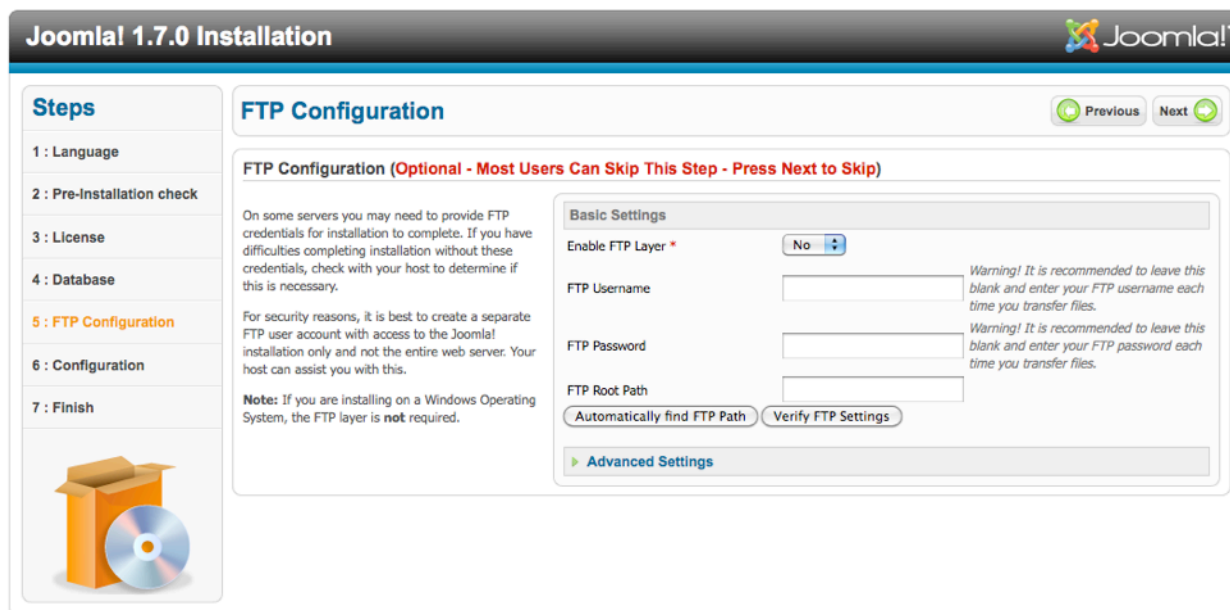
Now select the database name. In a productive environment on a database server with a provider, you probably have a fixed quota of databases and the database credentials are predefined. If you have root permission on your MySQL server, you can enter a name of a new database. Joomla! will then create that database.

By clicking the green triangle at *advanced settings*, additional options will appear. You can select whether the tables of any existing Joomla! installation in this database should be cleared or saved and marked with the prefix bak_.

The *MySQL table prefix* is really practical. In front of each table name generated by the web installer, it writes the text that you typed in the appropriate field. As a default, the web installer suggests a randomly created one, like *w02rh_*. This has a simple reason. Sometimes you may only be able to get one MySQL database from your provider. If you want to run two or more Joomla! sites, you have a problem, as the tables do not differ from each other. With the table prefix it is possible to distinguish several tables (*w01client_* or *w02client_*). Here, you should use the default *w02rh_*. The prefix is also used to indicate saved data (*bak_*); see above.

Step 5 - FTP-configuration

In order to avoid problems with access rights and possibly turned on PHP Safe Mode, you have the possibility to use the FTP functions of PHP for the upload and file handling. This is not necessary in a local installation. If you have installed Joomla! on a virtual server with your provider, you can enter the FTP data provided by your ISP. If your provider allows this function, it is advisable for security reasons, to create different FTP accounts for users and for the Joomla! installation. Activate the FTP account just for that Joomla! directory (*Figure 5*).



The screenshot shows the Joomla! 1.7.0 Installation interface. On the left, a 'Steps' sidebar lists: 1: Language, 2: Pre-Installation check, 3: License, 4: Database, 5: FTP Configuration (highlighted), 6: Configuration, and 7: Finish. Below the list is an icon of a box and a CD. The main area is titled 'FTP Configuration' and includes a 'Previous' button and a 'Next' button. A red banner states: 'FTP Configuration (Optional - Most Users Can Skip This Step - Press Next to Skip)'. The text explains that FTP credentials are needed for some servers and that a separate FTP user account should be created. A note mentions that the FTP layer is not required on Windows. The 'Basic Settings' section contains: 'Enable FTP Layer' (set to 'No'), 'FTP Username' (with a warning to leave blank), 'FTP Password' (with a warning to leave blank), and 'FTP Root Path' (with buttons for 'Automatically find FTP Path' and 'Verify FTP Settings'). An 'Advanced Settings' link is at the bottom.

Figure 5: Installer – FTP-configuration

Step 6 - Configuration

The main configuration is divided into three steps.

In the first part of the configuration the name of your site is requested. This name will appear in the title bar of the browser window when someone accesses your site. The name is also used at various other places, such as in confirmation emails to registered users. For our example page, I'll use the name Joomla! (*Figure 6*). In the second part, the name, e-mail address and administrator password are requested. Writing down the password on a piece of paper is probably best (but do not stick it on the screen or under the keyboard :-)).

In the third part, you specify the type of data your Joomla! installation should contain.

Installation of sample data

The data is the most important thing in your installation. Joomla! allows (and strongly recommends for beginners) the installation of sample data. You will be provided with a small manual about Joomla! and many examples to experiment safely. Click the button *install sample data*. The installer will load the data into your database and change the display (*Figure 6*). This process is somewhat unimpressive but necessary for installing sample data. The button will disappear and a small text box will be visible.

Joomla! 1.7.0 Installation

Steps

- 1 : Language
- 2 : Pre-Installation check
- 3 : License
- 4 : Database
- 5 : FTP Configuration
- 6 : Configuration
- 7 : Finish

Main Configuration

Site Name

Enter the name of your Joomla! site.
Optional: You can also enter Meta Description and Meta keywords for your site.

Basic Settings

Site Name * Joomla! 1.7

Advanced Settings - Optional

Confirm the Admin email and Password.

Enter your email address. This will be the email address of the Web site Super Administrator.
Enter a new password and then confirm it in the appropriate fields. You may change the default username **admin**. These will be the Username and password that you will use to login to the Administrator Control Panel at the end of the installation.
If you are migrating, you can ignore this section. Your current settings will be automatically migrated.

Admin Email * info@cocoate.com

Admin Username * admin

Admin Password * *****

Confirm Admin Password *

Load sample data

Important! It is strongly recommended that new Joomla! users install the default sample data. To do this click on the button *before* moving to the next stage.

1. Sample data: Before leaving the installation, you can populate the site database with data. There are two ways to do this:

1a. Default sample data can be inserted. To do this, make sure the Default: English (GB) Sample data is displayed in the drop-down and click the Install Sample Data button.

1b. Custom sample data can be inserted. To do this, choose an available sample data in the drop-down and click the Install Sample Data button.

2. Clean Installation: If you wish to perform a clean installation, enter the site name, admin email and choose a password. Then proceed to the final step by clicking *Next*.

Sample Data set Default: English (GB) Sample Data

Sample Data installed successfully.

Installing sample data is strongly recommended for beginners. This will install sample content that is included in the Joomla! installation package.

Figure 6: Installer – Configuration – Name, E-Mail, Password, Sample data

Click on the button *NEXT* and the data will be transferred.

Step 7 – Completion

In the seventh and final step you will be congratulated on having successfully installed Joomla! (Figure 7). Congratulations from me as well! You will now see an advisory in bold letters appearing in the display, prompting you to delete the directory called 'Installation'. You should follow this advisory because your Joomla! website will otherwise not run properly.

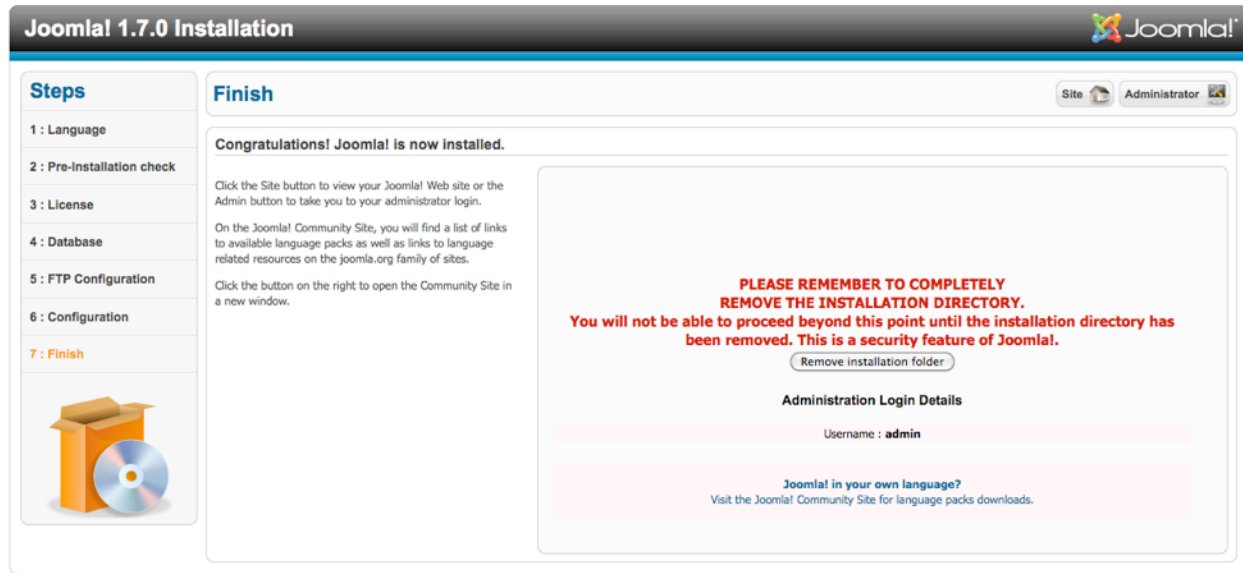


Figure 7: Installer – Completion

Note: A file named `configuration.php` has been created in your document directory. If you would like to repeat the installation, you will need to delete the file `configuration.php` before deleting the *installation directory*. The Joomla! installer will start anew when you pull up the URL in your browser, where your Joomla! files are located.

Now that you have fully installed Joomla! you can begin configuring your website and content. You have the choice between the buttons *Site* (see website) and *Admin* (administration interface). Go ahead and have a look at your newly created website and click on *Site*. In case you have not yet deleted the *installation directory*, you will once again receive a friendly reminder to do so now and then refresh the page.

The result looks very impressive (*Figure 9*).

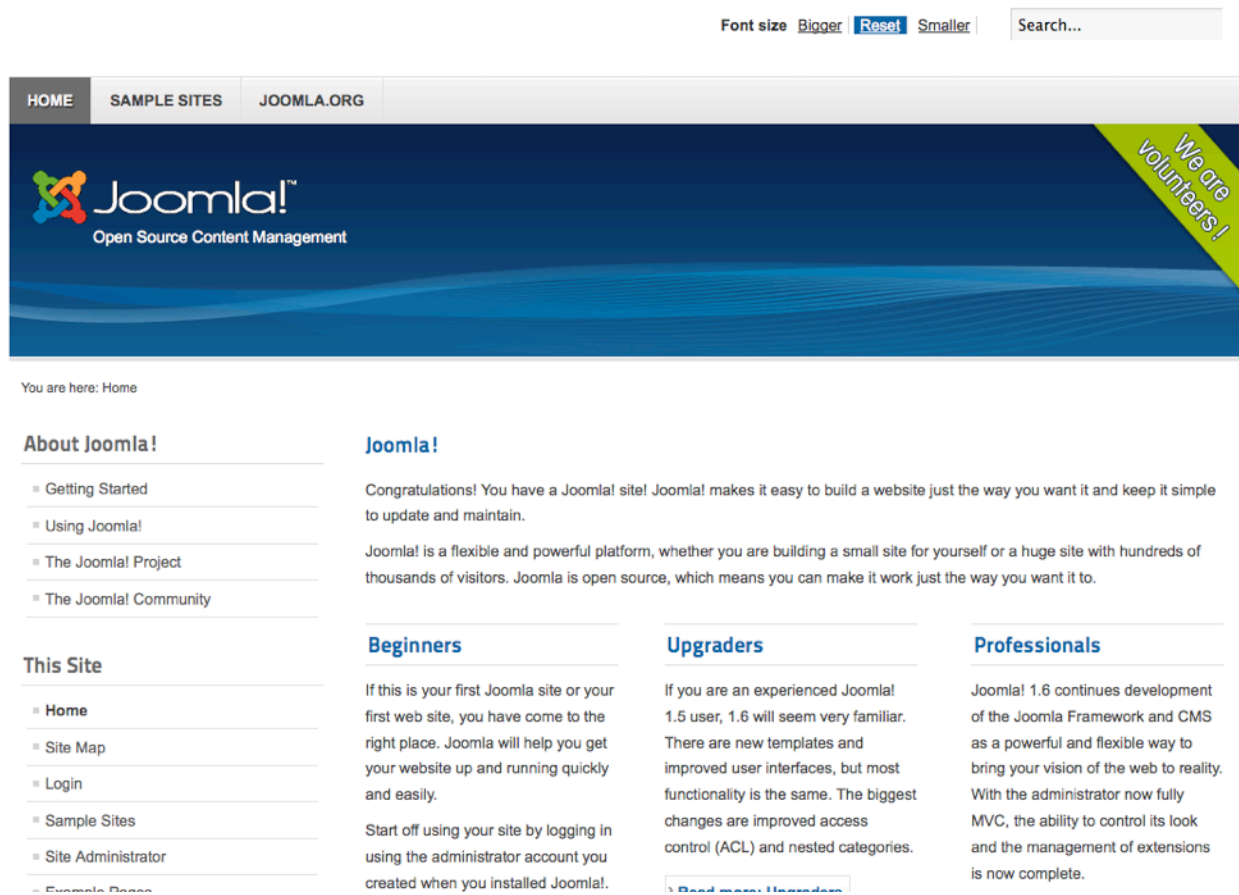


Figure 9: Your website directly after installation

Have a look around, browse through a few options and try to familiarize yourself with your new site. Many features of Joomla! are being used on this website filled with sample data. Next, we are going to look at these in detail!

UNPUBLISH EXAMPLE DATA

If you are installing Joomla! 1.7 for the first time, I recommend you also install the example data. Take your time and explore the website and how it all comes together. The example data show you how the website looks with content and comes with short explanations of the example content and modules. To get a brief overview, read the 50 pages behind the menu item "Using Joomla!".

Now that you have seen enough, you would probably love to configure your website according to your needs and wishes.

How to get an empty Joomla! ?

To get an empty version, you can:

- Install a fresh Joomla! 1.6 without example data:
Create a new folder in your local web directory (*/htdocs*) and install the new Joomla!. Now you have two complete Joomla! installations. This approach is very helpful for training purposes.
- Delete the example data in your administration area.
- Unpublish the example data. Please watch the video attached, in which I am going to show you how to do that.

If you decide to follow step 2 or 3, you will need to login in the administration area. There you can delete and/or unpublish the example data and menu items.

Menu manager

Go to the Menu Manager in the *Top Menu* (Menus -> Top), click the check boxes on the left side above the menu items to choose all of them, and then click the icon *Unpublish*. After you have done this, you will see a red icon on each menu item (*Figure 10*). If you now go back to your website (refresh it), you will notice that the top menu is no longer visible. Repeat the same procedure with the *Main Menu* and the *About Joomla!* menu. Make sure you choose all menu items, except the Home/Frontpage item. This menu item cannot be deleted because you need a frontpage. In the lower area, you may change the number of displayed menu items (*Figure 11*).

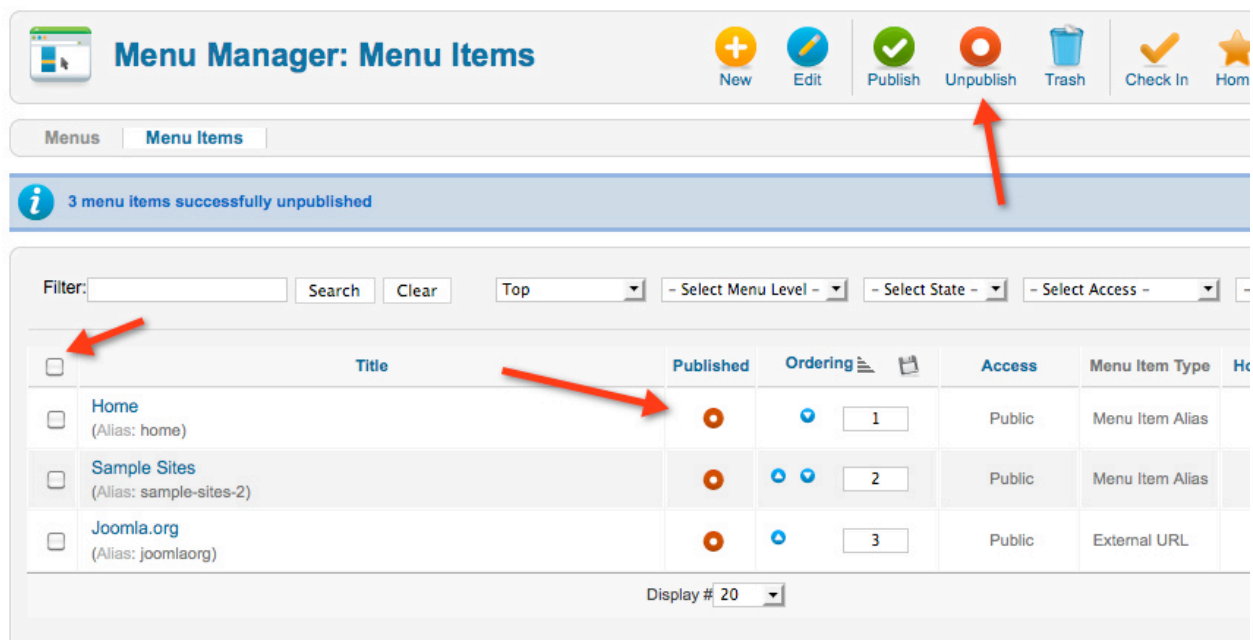


Figure 10: Menu manager I

Administration Joomla!

Site Users Menus Content Components Extensions Help 0 Logged-in frontend 1 Logged-in backend 0 Messages View Site Log out

Menu Manager: Menu Items

Menus Menu Items

Filter: Search Clear Main Menu - Select Menu Level - Select State - Select Access - Select Language -

<input type="checkbox"/>	Title	Published	Ordering	Access	Menu Item Type	Home	Language	ID
<input type="checkbox"/>	Home (Alias: homepage)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	Public	Articles » Featured Articles	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All	435
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site Map (Alias: site-map)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	Public	Articles » Single Article	<input type="checkbox"/>	All	294
<input type="checkbox"/>	Articles (Alias: articles)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	Public	Articles » List All Categories	<input type="checkbox"/>	All	290
<input type="checkbox"/>	Weblinks (Alias: weblinks)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	Public	Weblinks » List All Web Link Categories	<input type="checkbox"/>	All	438
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contacts (Alias: contacts)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	Public	Contacts » List All Contact Categories	<input type="checkbox"/>	All	439
<input type="checkbox"/>	Login (Alias: login)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	Public	Users Manager » Login Form	<input type="checkbox"/>	All	233
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sample Sites (Alias: sample-sites)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4	Public	Articles » Single Article	<input type="checkbox"/>	All	238
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parks (Alias: parks)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	Public	Menu Item Alias		All	445
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shop (Alias: shop)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	Public	Menu Item Alias		All	446
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site Administrator (Alias: site-administrator)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5	Public	External URL		All	448
<input type="checkbox"/>	Example Pages (Alias: example-pages)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6	Public	Menu Item Alias		All	455

Display # 20 5 10 15 20 25 30 50 100 All

Batch process the selected menu items

Set Access Level

Select Menu or Parent for Move/Copy

Copy Move

Figure 11: Menu manager II

Article manager

Use the same procedure as described above. Open the article manager and choose all content items to unpublish or delete them.

Cache

To make sure that all data will disappear from your site, you have to clear the entire cache (*Site Maintenance* -> *Clear Cache*). Again, choose all content and delete it.

Empty Website

Your Joomla! is now "empty" (Figure 12).

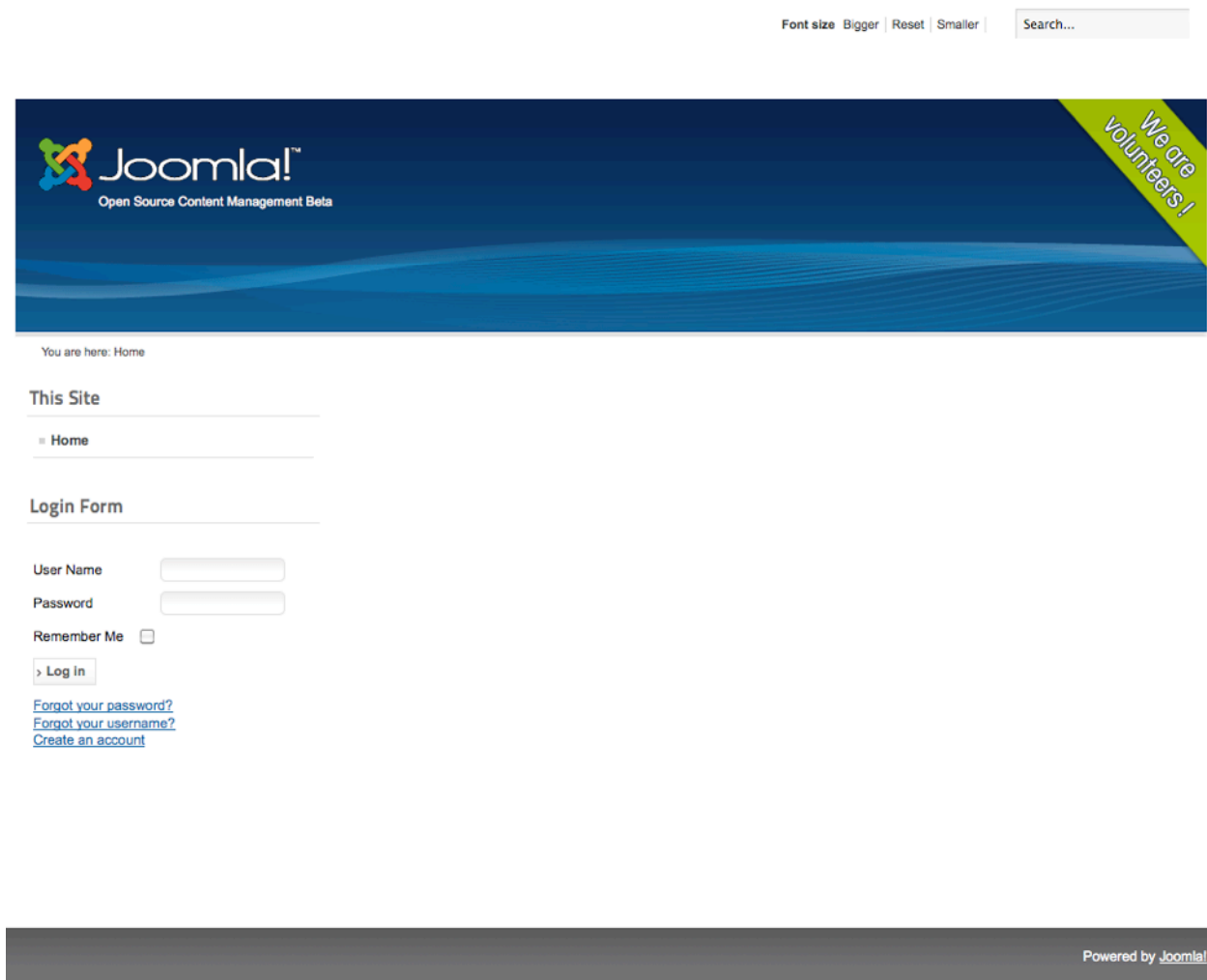


Figure 12: Joomla! without example data

Advertisement



Joomla Extensions

www.theFactory.ro

Find qualitative extensions (components, modules and plugins) for your Joomla based sites through our vast product range. Customer satisfaction, flexibility, cost effectiveness are some of the main principles which are guiding us through a professional development process.

Featured



Auction Factory

Auction Factory - the ultimate Auction System for Joomla - supports all common auction types including also Proxy Bidding. Auctions are supporting the usual Bids and BuyItNow features. Also they can be set as Private (bids are hidden to the public) or Public (bids are showed to the public).

Best Buy



Love Factory

Love Factory - Social Community Extension for Joomla - its an all in all extension with multiple purposes like on social networking sites, for friends, dating, etc. It features member pages, photo gallery, custom fields, comments, messaging, ratings, interactions, dynamic memberships, template system and multiple payment gateway system.



jAnswers Factory

jAnswers Factory - Question and Answers for Joomla - where users can ask questions and the community is providing answers. A Ranking system for answers is available and users can report offensive text, mark favorite questions or use the extended search through the Knowledgebase.



Ads Factory

Ads Factory - Classified Web Ads System for Joomla - has extensive user support offering HTML description for the ads and a user extended profile. The content display is fully configurable through a template, since the component uses a template engine. This make the adjustment to the site template very easy offering full freedom.



Media Mall Factory

MediaMall Factory provides is a powerful solution to manage media files online distribution with a built in Credit System. Using the MediaMall solution users can post their media files on your site and sell them online. For each media file a number of Credits can be perceived in order to visualize the file.



Collection Factory

Collection Factory allows collectors to create and maintain a user-friendly database of their collected items, organizing them in unlimited categories and subcategories and including various statistical and financial reports, helping to keep evidence of owned items, but also keeping record of the missing ones.

www.theFactory.ro

Sunday, 24 July 2011

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Chapter 4

Structures and Terms

I would like to explain and clarify some structures and terms before we begin with the configuration.

FRONTEND

With the frontend we mean the areas of the website as visitors or registered users see it. A registered user normally works only in the frontend. It is like in a store, where the goods are displayed in shop windows and on shelves. Here you can have a look around.

BACKEND

This is your administration area, therefore, we call it just administration. You can give registered users the right to work in your backend. This privilege is mostly limited to several employees, who should administer some tasks on the website. You can access the administration login via /administrator.

<http://localhost/administrator>

There you can register with your login details and choose your preferred language. (*Figure 1*).

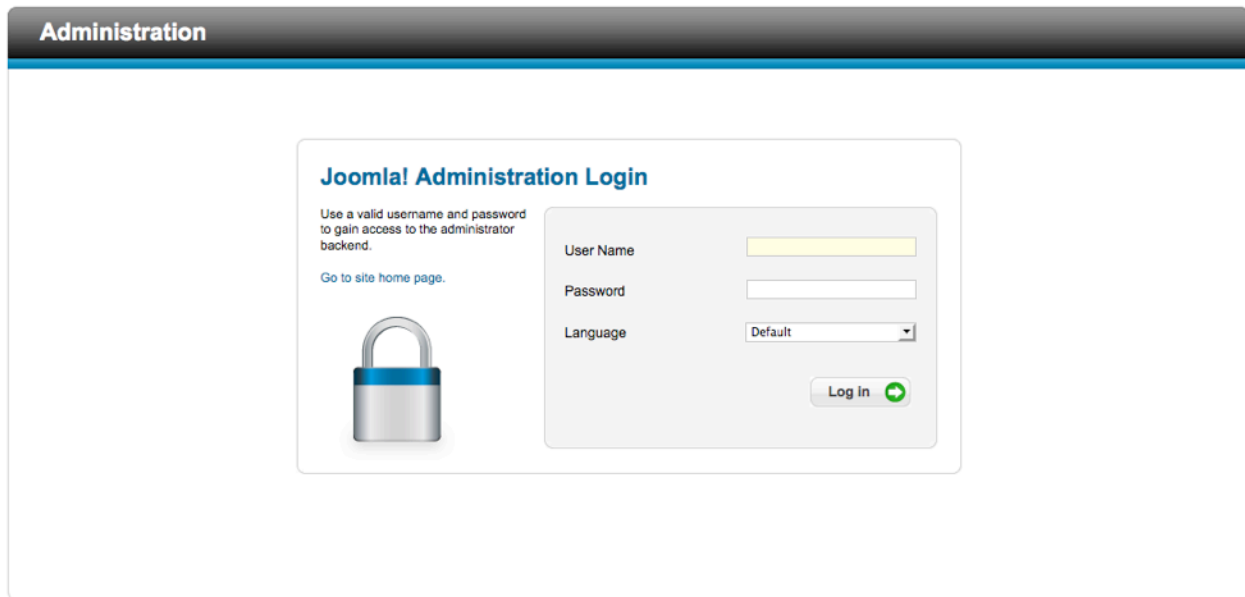


Figure 1: Joomla! Administration registration

Once logged in successfully, you'll have access to the administration, which is structured according to your user rights. (*Figure 2*).

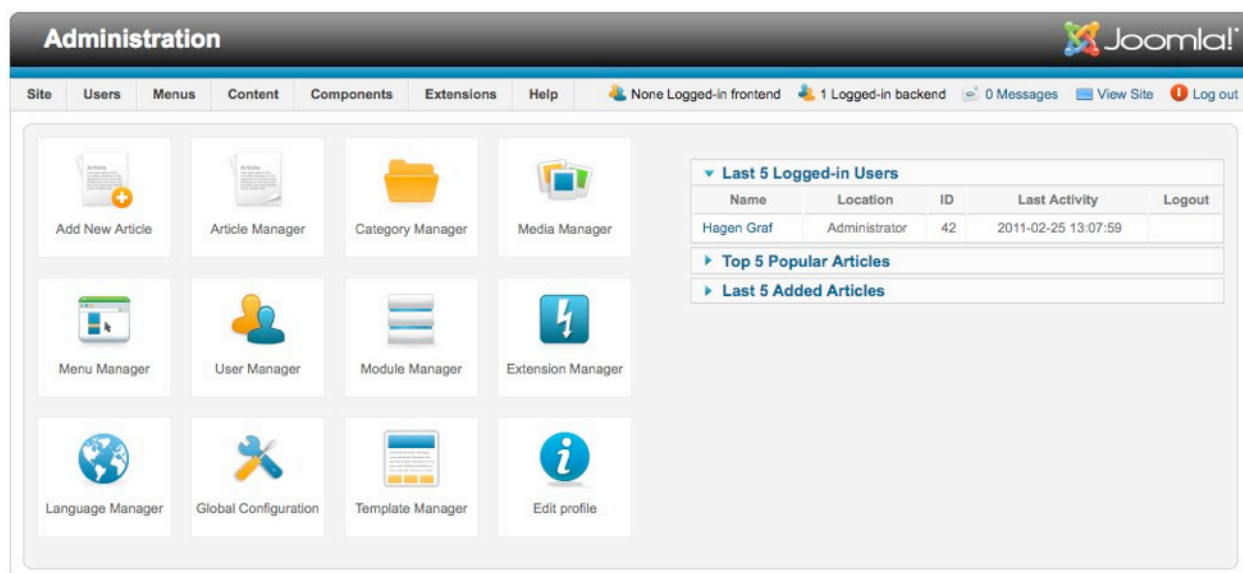


Figure 2: Administration

You may access each function either by using the combined menu tab system or by simply clicking an icon on the start screen.

FILES

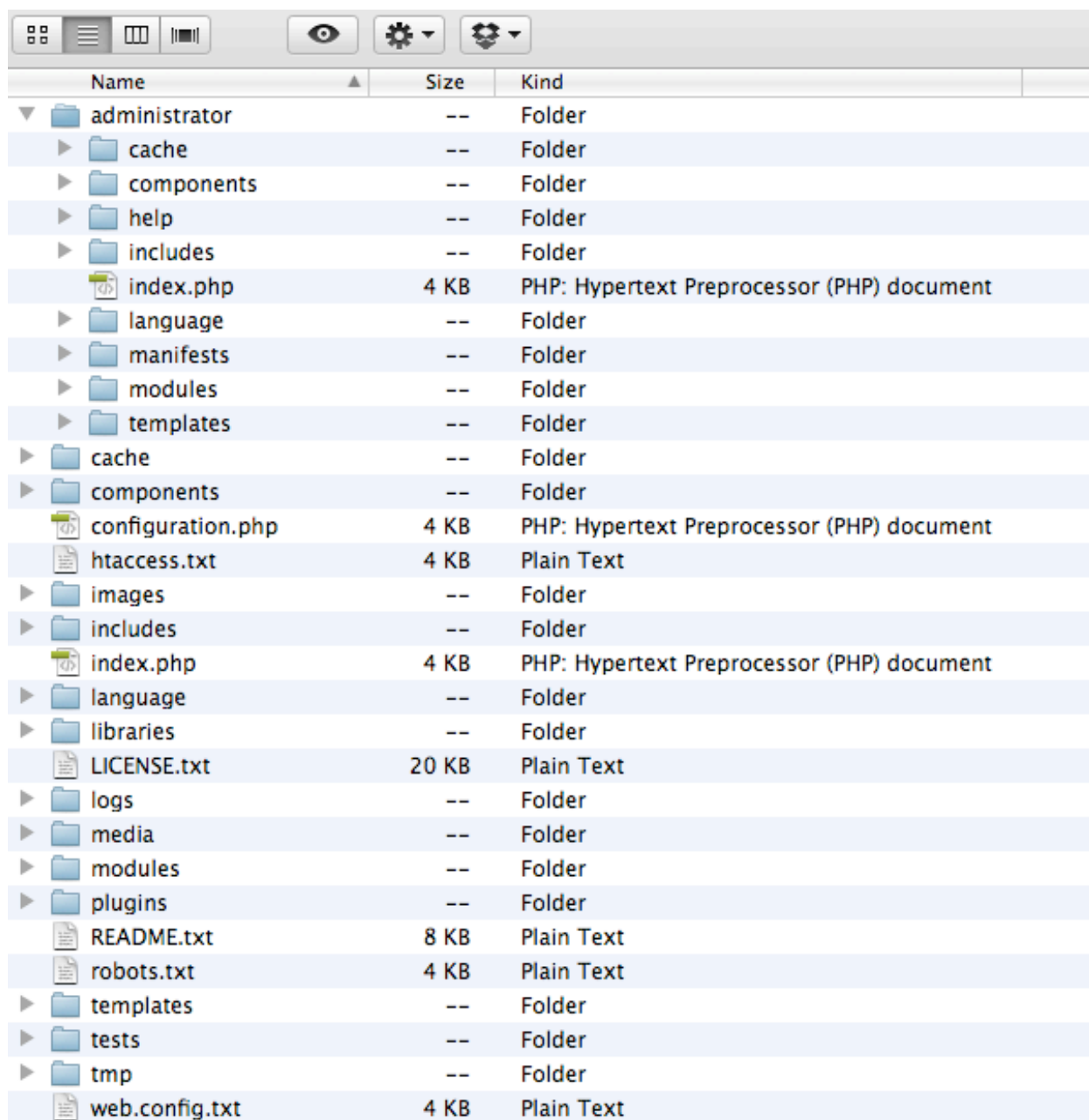
Joomla! consists of hundreds of files. Images, PHP scripts, CSS files, JavaScript files and a many more.

You probably already noticed this when you unpacked the compressed package and copied it into the htdocs folder. Basically, you have already installed two Joomla! packages: one for the frontend and one for the backend. The 'Backend Joomla!' is located in the *administrator* folder (*Figure 3*).

This folder is addressed when you call `/administrator` in the browser. Inside that folder are other folders like *cache*, *components*, *language*, *modules* and *templates*. The specific backend files are stored in these directories.

You will find the same folder names again outside the *administrator* folder. These folders contain the frontend files. These are not really two Joomla! packages, but there is a clear separation between backend and frontend files.

For example, all files uploaded with the *Media Manager* will be saved in the `/media` folder. All files have to be saved with a backup.



Name	Size	Kind
▼ administrator	--	Folder
▶ cache	--	Folder
▶ components	--	Folder
▶ help	--	Folder
▶ includes	--	Folder
index.php	4 KB	PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor (PHP) document
▶ language	--	Folder
▶ manifests	--	Folder
▶ modules	--	Folder
▶ templates	--	Folder
▶ cache	--	Folder
▶ components	--	Folder
configuration.php	4 KB	PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor (PHP) document
htaccess.txt	4 KB	Plain Text
▶ images	--	Folder
▶ includes	--	Folder
index.php	4 KB	PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor (PHP) document
▶ language	--	Folder
▶ libraries	--	Folder
LICENSE.txt	20 KB	Plain Text
▶ logs	--	Folder
▶ media	--	Folder
▶ modules	--	Folder
▶ plugins	--	Folder
README.txt	8 KB	Plain Text
robots.txt	4 KB	Plain Text
▶ templates	--	Folder
▶ tests	--	Folder
▶ tmp	--	Folder
web.config.txt	4 KB	Plain Text

Figure 3: Joomla! 1.6 files and folder

DATABASE

Additionally to files (graphics, documents, system files, etc.) Joomla! also needs a database. During the installation procedure, the Joomla! web installer creates 33 tables in your specified database (*Figure 4*). In these tables, all content will be managed.

Table	Action	Records	Type	Collation	Size	Overhead
jos_assets		159	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	34.5 KiB	-
jos_banners		3	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	13.7 KiB	-
jos_banner_clients		1	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	10.1 KiB	-
jos_banner_tracks		0	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	1.0 KiB	-
jos_categories		67	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	41.8 KiB	-
jos_contact_details		8	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	18.7 KiB	-
jos_content		66	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	88.3 KiB	-
jos_content_frontpage		4	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	2.0 KiB	-
jos_content_rating		0	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	1.0 KiB	-
jos_core_log_searches		0	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	1.0 KiB	-
jos_extensions		109	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	30.7 KiB	-
jos_languages		1	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	3.1 KiB	-
jos_menu		139	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	130.9 KiB	-
jos_menu_types		6	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	3.3 KiB	-
jos_messages		0	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	1.0 KiB	-
jos_messages_cfg		0	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	2.0 KiB	-
jos_modules		61	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	20.9 KiB	-
jos_modules_menu		156	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	6.4 KiB	-
jos_newsfeeds		4	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	10.1 KiB	-
jos_redirect_links		0	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	2.0 KiB	-
jos_schemas		0	MyISAM	utf8_general_ci	1.0 KiB	-

Figure 4: The Joomla! data base tables

When I say content, I mean texts and configuration settings. The tables in the screenshot are displayed by means of phpMyAdmin. phpMyAdmin is a part of XAMPP and MAMP and is available via <http://localhost/phpMyAdmin>

Usually, no changes need to be made in these tables. In case you forget your admin password, phpMyAdmin is very helpful.

This software can also be used for backing up your database by creating a so-called SQL dump, as your tables have to be secured regularly.

ELEMENTS OF JOOMLA!

The structure of Joomla! is simple, sophisticated and efficient.

Joomla! assumes that you want to write an article. An article usually consists of a title, text and some configuration settings.

Article

Articles can be displayed in single or list view.

On the frontpage of your recently installed Joomla! website you will see these four articles (*Figure 5*).

Beginners



Kategorie: [Joomla!](#)

veröffentlicht am: Samstag, 10 Juli 2010 19:50

Geschrieben von: Joomla!

Zugriffe: 0

If this is your first Joomla site or your first web site, you have come to the right place. Joomla will help you get your website up and running quickly and easily.

Start off using your site by logging in using the administrator account you created when you installed Joomla!.

Explore the articles and other resources right here on your site data to learn more about how Joomla works. (When you're done reading, you can delete or archive all of this.) You will also probably want to visit the beginners' areas of the [Joomla documentation](#) and [support forums](#).

You'll also want to sign up for the Joomla Security Mailing list and the Announcements mailing list. For inspiration visit the Joomla Site Showcase to see an amazing array of ways people use Joomla to tell their stories on the web.

The basic Joomla! installation will let you get a great site up and running, but when you are ready for more features the power of Joomla! is in the creative ways that developers have extended it to do all kinds of things. Visit the Joomla! Extensions Directory to see thousands of extensions that can do almost anything you could want on a website. Can't find what you need? You may want to find a Joomla professional on the Joomla! Resources Directory.

Want to learn more? Consider attending a Joomla! Day or other event or joining a local Joomla! Users Group. Can't find one near you? Start one yourself.

Figure 5: Article on frontpage

The articles are sorted in a certain manner. The first article is displayed by using the full width of the website. The other articles are placed below in three columns. If the articles are too long, you may insert a *read more* link. This representation is a list view. By clicking on the *read more* link you will be redirected to the single representation of that article (*figure 6*). The type of display can be changed by setting *options* in the backend, however, only by the user with corresponding access rights.

Joomla!

Congratulations! You have a Joomla! site! Joomla! makes your site easy to build a website just the way you want it and keep it simple to update and maintain.

Joomla! is a flexible and powerful platform, whether you are building a small site for yourself or a huge site with hundreds of thousands of visitors. Joomla is open source, which means you can make it work just the way you want it to.

Beginners

If this is your first Joomla site or your first web site, you have come to the right place. Joomla will help you get your website up and running quickly and easily.

Start off using your site by logging in using the administrator account you created when you installed Joomla!.

[> Weiterlesen: Beginners](#)

Upgraders

If you are an experienced Joomla! 1.5 user, 1.6 will seem very familiar. There are new templates and improved user interfaces, but most functionality is the same. The biggest changes are improved access control (ACL) and nested categories.

[> Weiterlesen: Upgraders](#)

Professionals

Joomla! 1.6 continues development of the Joomla Framework and CMS as a powerful and flexible way to bring your vision of the web to reality. With the administrator now fully MVC, the ability to control its look and the management of extensions is now complete.

[> Weiterlesen: Professionals](#)

Figure 6: single display of an article

Articles can be published (*publish*) or not published (*unpublish*). You can feature articles on your frontpage, you can archive them or put them in the trash and retrieve them. You can copy and move them.

Categories

In order to display articles clearly, you may create categories, and then assign an article to them. Each article can be assigned to exactly one category (*Figure 7*). The categories can be nested to any depth. Articles from one or multiple categories can be assigned to one menu item and displayed in various ways. By clicking on the menu item, all articles from different categories will be shown. This principle is used by online newspapers, for example. You click on *Sports* and get all categorized articles for this topic. If the newspaper discerns between different forms of sports, they will use nested category trees:

- Sports
 - Football
 - Handball
- Politics
 - Domestic
 - Europe
 - World

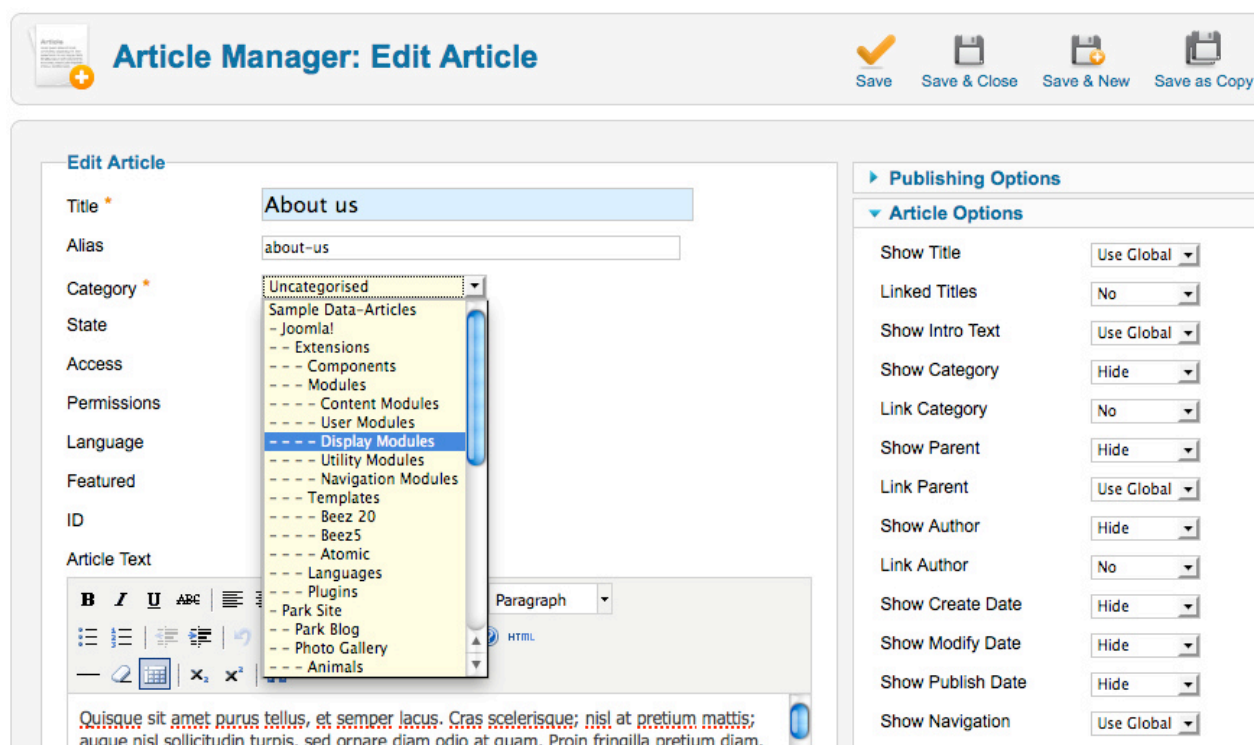


Figure 7: Category assignment

User

Users are needed to produce content. At least one user is registered on each Joomla! site, namely the one you created during the installation, with the rights to configure everything on your site. Depending on the user's rights, he can work in frontend and/or backend to write an article. Each user requires a username, an email address and a password. Every user can be assigned to any user group as well as to any access level. This enables the user to create articles that are only visible to certain user groups.

Navigation

To find your way around the website, you will need navigation with corresponding links. In Joomla! we call this a *menu*. You may create as many menus as desired and nest them into as many different ways as you wish. Each menu is a module which can be positioned on a provided area in the template.

Module

A module is something that you can position next to an article. A menu, for example, is a module. The small registration block on the left side is also a module. You can create as many modules with smart functions as you need and position them on the predefined area in the template.

Templates

A template is the graphical pattern for your website. It mostly consists of HTML and CSS files. Joomla! delivers several templates for you to choose from. Templates are configurable, which allows you to upload a different logo, change the background color, etc. Each template provides areas where modules can be positioned (*Figure 8*).

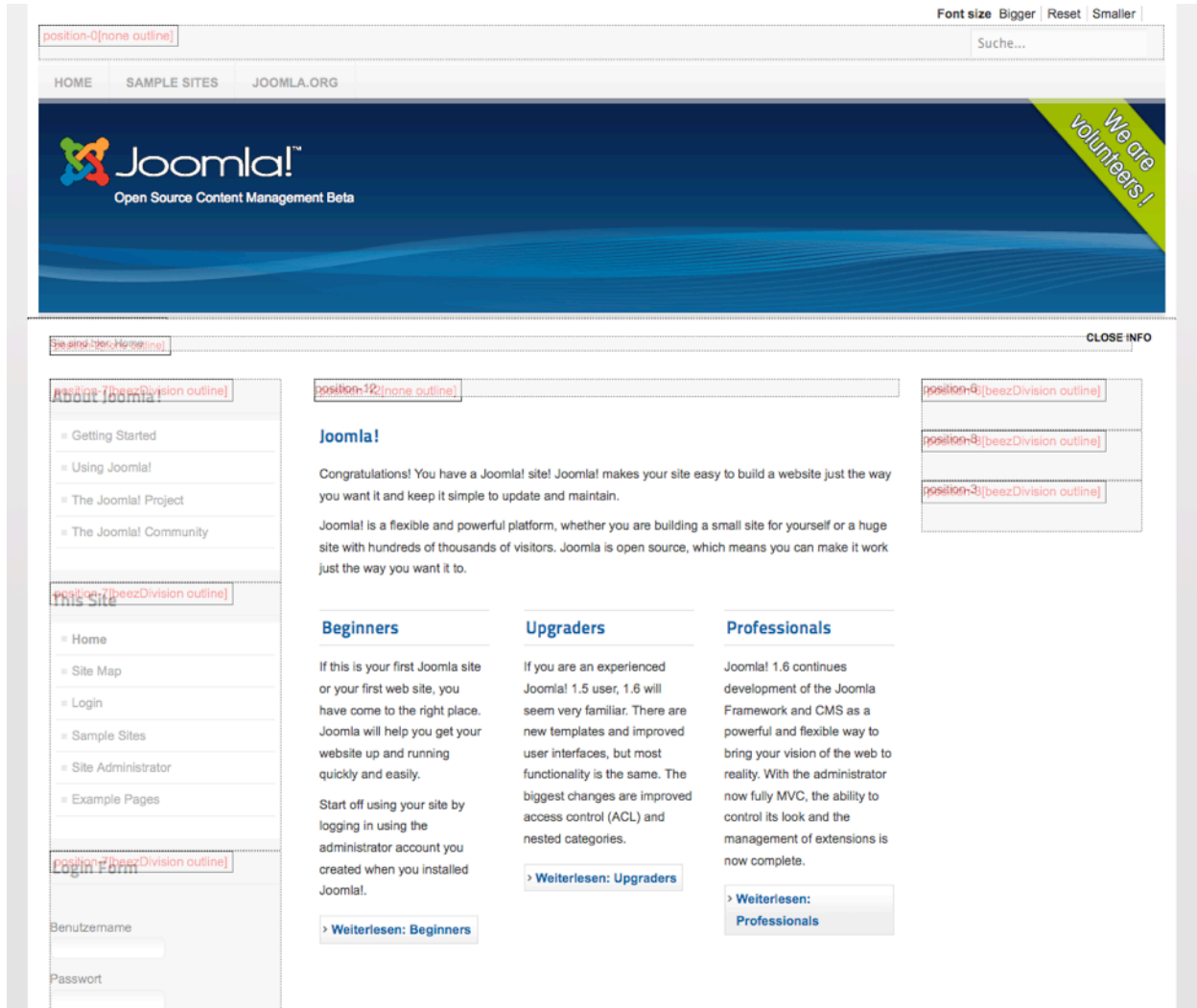


Figure 8: Template Positions

You can group modules around one or more articles.

Plug-ins

A plug-in provides practical services but is usually invisible to the visitors of the site. A wysiwyg editor, for example, is a plug-in. Plug-ins are extensions, which can be installed unlimited amount of times. The core package already consists of numerous useful plug-ins.

Components

Components are the little surprise packages that help you create nearly anything on your site. You want to have a booking system for workshops? A platform for properties? A forum? An

image gallery? You just have to install the right component!

The Joomla! core package already comes with some components, e.g., the contact component, which enables you to integrate contact forms into your site. There are thousands of components to enhance your Joomla! 1.6 system.

Options

You will need individual configuration settings for your website; we call them options. These options are applied to the whole website, for users, categories, modules, components. You will always find an icon named *Options* like, e.g., that one (*Figure 9*), which provides you with the possibility to see the position of modules (*Figure 8*) by inserting `http://localhost/index.php?tp=1`. The initial *tp* stands for template position.

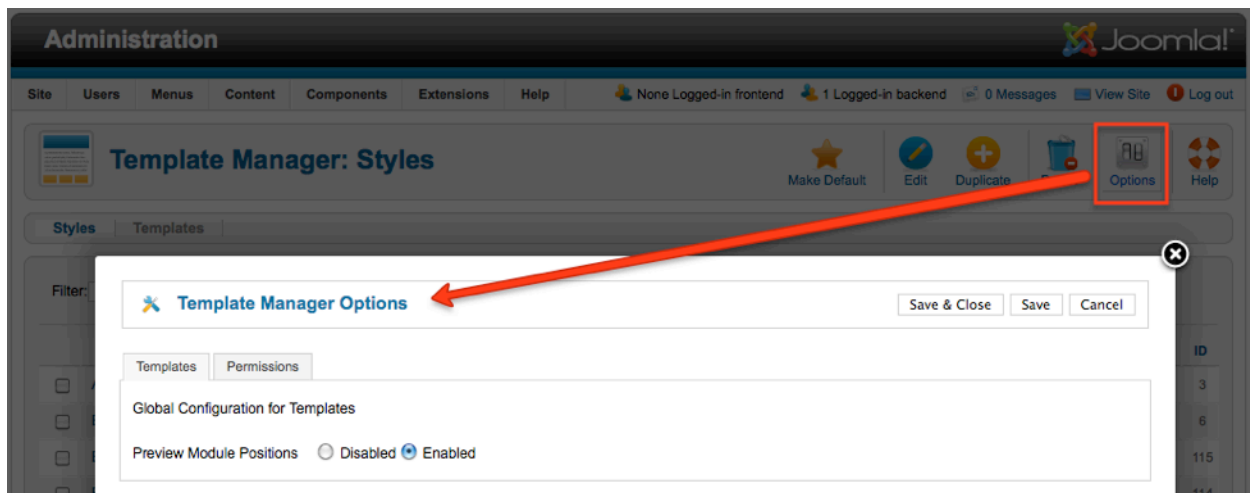


Figure 9: Options

Other structures

Other structures for user interfaces, templates and technical relations are also available. For the time being, you are well equipped by remembering the described structures above.

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 - ✓ No inline HTML
 - ✓ Manage unlimited lists with unlimited subscribers
 - ✓ Powerful interface for creating lists and assigning subscribers
 - ✓ Create newsletter from 3 standard templates, or make your own
 - ✓ Get advanced reports on your newsletters
- and much more...

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- ✓ Uses breadcrumb to populate the site title

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We'll give you a nice discount!*

Chapter 5

What's New?

On July 19th, Joomla 1.7 will be released and this version is something special because of various reasons. Before I go into details, I want to mention a few user groups.

JOOMLA! USER GROUPS

There are so many people in the world using Joomla! for their own purpose. Joomla! now powers 2.7% of all existing websites in the world. I'll just mention a few of them here.

Newbies

If you need a website and you are new to Joomla!, you can download and install it and you can build your website in a very easy way. Even when you are only using the core package, and even if you are just a beginner in this field. If you need help getting started, here is a link: <http://cocoate.com/j17>

Have fun!

Site Builders, web designers

A site builder usually has existing websites which are based on various Joomla! versions. So the interest is more in questions like:

- Are there any new features for my clients?
- Is there something inside that helps me to be more productive?
- Is there an easy upgrade path?

Developers

- They know the programming languages PHP and JavaScript and like to use them.
- They create additional extensions to the Joomla! core for free, or for profit as a business.
- Developers are always thinking of new features and productivity.

Service Providers

They run a business and provide services like hosting, training, and extension and theme development.

Architects

They are thinking about security, speed and code quality.

The Joomla! leadership teams

They are leading the project in some way and should communicate a clear vision

The Joomla! community

All the groups mentioned above are, or could be, members of 'the Joomla! community'. Ask yourself 'What do I expect from a new major release'?

Most of these group members are asking themselves

- Is Joomla! the right solution for my needs?
- Can I make money with it?

WHAT'S NEW IN JOOMLA! 1.7

For people who look at the user interface or to any 'visible' features I have a short answer. In the user interface of the alpha version I examined, only one single checkbox is added in the mass mail component. It is now possible to include or exclude blocked users in a mass mail. This is a nice feature but it will not 'blow your mind'.

INTRODUCTION OF A RELEASE CYCLE

It is not that new, but it's very necessary to understand it. In 2010, a release cycle of short and long term releases was introduced for Joomla!.

Every six months, a new version of Joomla! will be released. It started with Joomla! 1.6 in January 2011 as the first short term release, and it continues now with Joomla! 1.7 as the second short term release.

After three short term releases, a long term release will come up.

That means, that every 18 months, a long term release of Joomla! will appear.

The first long term release will be Joomla! 1.8 in January 2012.

I found two infographics made by Gnumax (<http://twitter.com/gnumax>) and Sander Potjer (<http://twitter.com/sanderpotjer>) to visualize the release cycles (*Figure 1*, *Figure 2*).

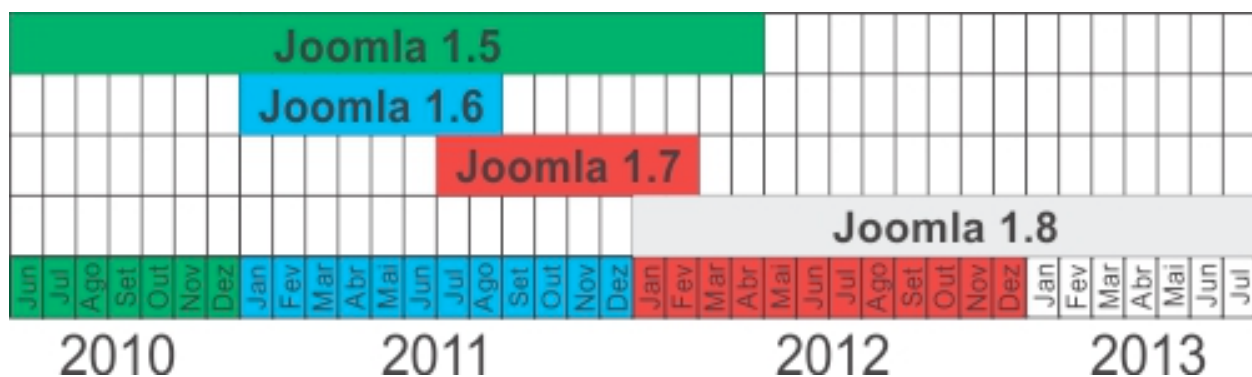


Figure 1: user groups refers to access level

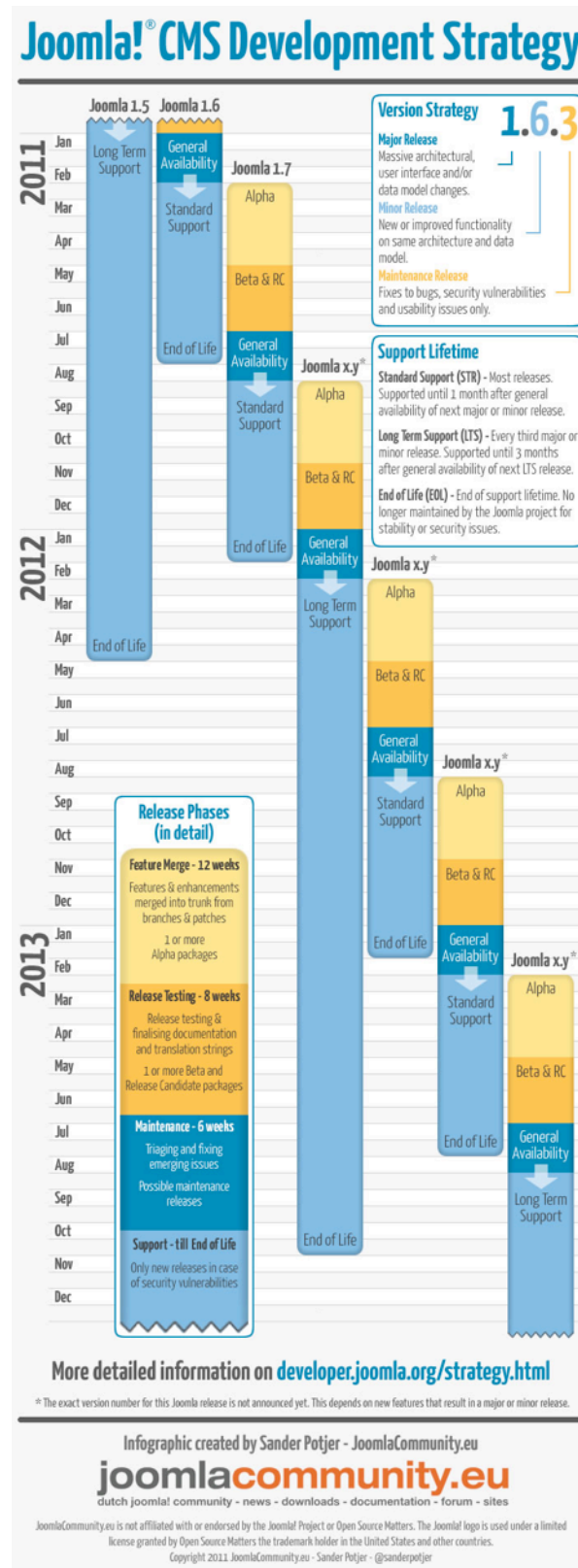


Figure 2: Joomla Development Strategy Infographic!

Support

How does support work with this new release cycle?

Long term releases

If you look at the existing Joomla! 1.5 as a long term release, it will be supported three months after the next long term release. This means that you don't have to upgrade your existing Joomla! 1.5 site to the upcoming Joomla! 1.7. But, in January 2012, when the next long term release comes out you have to think about updating and in April 2012 you should.

Short term releases

The support for a short term release ends with the release of the next short term release.

Update/Upgrade

If you use the newest version of Joomla! which currently is Joomla! 1.6.4, the update process is as easy as one-click in the backend.

If you are using an earlier version of Joomla! you can upgrade with the help of the jUpgrade component written by Matias Aguirre.

Keep in mind that it is not necessary to upgrade an existing Joomla! 1.5 site to Joomla! 1.7, but it would make your life easier to update once Joomla! 1.8 is released!

Introduction of the Joomla! platform

This is the first release of Joomla! where the core package consists of two parts

- the Joomla! platform
- the Joomla! content management system

JOOMLA! PLATFORM 11.2

The idea of this separation was born after the launch of Joomla! 1.0 in the year 2005 and it took nearly six years to implement it.

It will be released on July 4th, and it will change the way developers, architects and service providers deal with Joomla! in the future.

You'll Go Gaga



Over the New Joomla! Platform Release.



PLATFORM RELEASE DATE : JULY 4, 2011

Figure 3: Created by <http://cmsexpo.net/joomla-concept>

Well, going Gaga is definitely the right description :)
Let's have a closer look.

Numbering

What confuses me most when I tried this version was the numbering. But, I found a very simple answer to that.
The version 11.1 is the actual Joomla! Platform version and the first 'major release' will be 11.2. The numbering scheme for the platform consists of the year number followed by a sequence number, so 11.1 was the first release in 2011. The next release on July 4th will be 11.2. The first release in 2012 will be numbered 12.1.

Release cycle

Every three months a new version of the Joomla! platform will be released.

Package content

The platform package consists of the files stored in the folder /libraries and /media. The platform has no user interface.

The platform source code is stored in the Git version control system GitHub.

- code: <https://github.com/joomla/joomla-platform>
- members: <https://github.com/joomla/joomla-platform/network/members>

Advantages and benefits of the separation

1. It allows developers to use the Joomla Platform independently of the CMS.

This means that you'll have the choice between different CMSs on top of the Joomla! platform in the future. This is really revolutionary! Joomla! is the only system in the world which provides that.

There is still one core CMS provided by the Joomla! project but other projects like Molajo could use the Joomla! platform as a base, too.

2. It allows developers to contribute / add features more quickly

In the past it was very frustrating to experience that good code wasn't always included into Joomla! core. With the Joomla! platform stored on GitHub it is very easy to fork it for your own purpose and it is easy too to integrate your code in the main branch.

3. 3-month release cycle

With this short release cycle it is possible to add features into the platform much quicker than into the CMS. This is useful for extension developers to add core features which are necessary for their extension.

4. It encourages recruitment of more developers, including larger corporations, who may have not otherwise contributed

This point is crucial and it will work when the responsible team for the platform starts embracing these new faces!

Conclusion

The release of Joomla 1.7 and the Joomla! platform 11.2 will not introduce anything that is technically new, but it is the beginning of a new phase of the Joomla! project.

To come back to the headline.

In my point of view the Joomla! Platform is the heart beat of the project.

It's easy to write a CMS but it's hard to envision, construct, and maintain a long term platform.

Maybe it is the real, true beginning of the Joomla! project. Get involved!!

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and more...



Chapter 6

Managing Content

A content management system is made for managing content - who would have thought?!
So the next question is: What is content?

In media production and publishing, content is information and experiences that may provide value for an end-user/audience in specific contexts (*Wikipedia* ¹⁹).

Ok, I see, but what is it that provides value?

This question is indeed very hard to answer and quite individual but I think you now get the idea of content and a content management system like Joomla!.

A content management system is useful for managing information that provides value for your audience (*Hagen Graf* :-)).

TYPES OF CONTENT

In core Joomla! you have *articles*, *categories*, *web links*, *banners*, *contacts* and *feeds*. I am not sure whether creating value with banners is possible but banners are also a kind of content. *Modules* can be used for content creation as well. Often you may want to enrich your content with files like photos and other media types. For this Joomla! has its *Media manager*. This is what Joomla! core provides as your toolbox to manage all these bits and pieces to create value to your audience. I am going to cover these tools in the next chapters.

If this isn't enough for you, you can enhance Joomla! with so-called content construction kits²⁰ like K2²¹, FlexiContent²² or CCK jSeblod²³ and many other extensions, but that's another book entirely. :-)

¹⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Content_%28media%29

²⁰ <http://extensions.joomla.org/extensions/news-production/content-construction>

²¹ <http://getk2.org>

²² <http://www.flexicontent.org/>

²³ <http://www.seblod.com/>

HOW TO CREATE AN 'ABOUT US' PAGE

To give you a first real challenge, let's create a first page on your new website. It will be an *about us* page on which you can write about your company, your project, or yourself. Most of the time, a page like this contains a title, text and perhaps a few images.

Static vs. Dynamic content

An "about us" page is usually created once, is accessible via a menu link, and in the future all you will have to do is change it as you go. It has a static character. A press release or blog entry, however, have a dynamic character.

- For static pages, in contrast to dynamic pages, the creation date and author do not really matter.
- Static pages are usually accessible via a menu link whereas dynamic pages can be accessed through lists.

The plan

The 'about us' page should consist of the following components:

- a title,
- a text,
- an image.
- The page should not appear on the front page.
- We want a link to the page in the top horizontal menu (top).

This may sound simple at first :-). Go ahead and log into the administration interface!

Step 1 - Create content

Go to the *Article Manager* (*Content* → *Article Manager*). There you might still see your unpublished sample data (*Figure 1*).

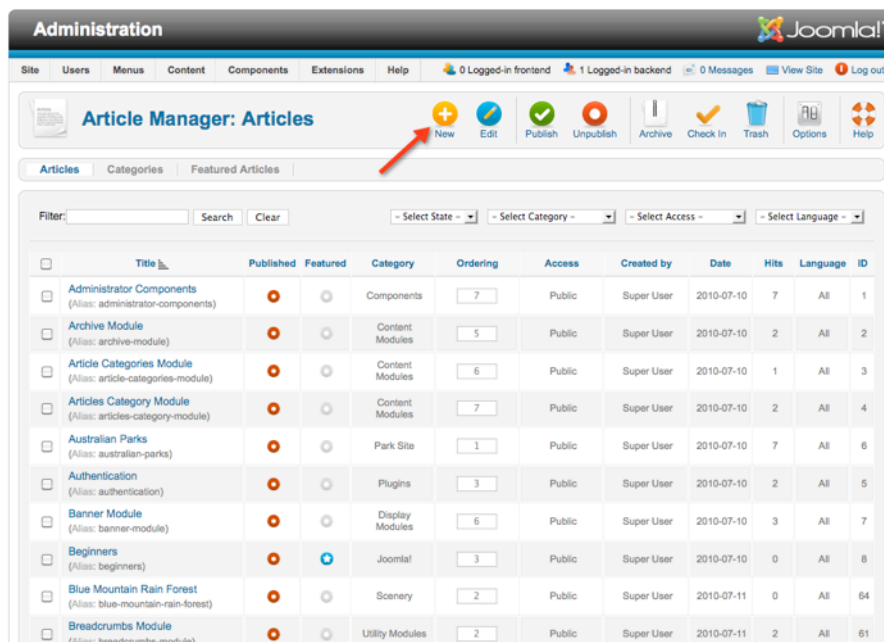


Figure 1: Article manager

Click the icon to get to the appropriate form and then add the title and text. In the upper pane, below the title, select "uncategorized" as a category. This category was created by installing the *example data*. The field *Featured* indicates whether the content should be displayed in the *featured blog layout*, which is mostly used as the front page. This still works in Joomla! 1.6 but the terms can easily be misunderstood. Select *No*. In the editor window, you may now enter your text. Joomla! comes with the default editor *TinyMCE* (Figure 2).

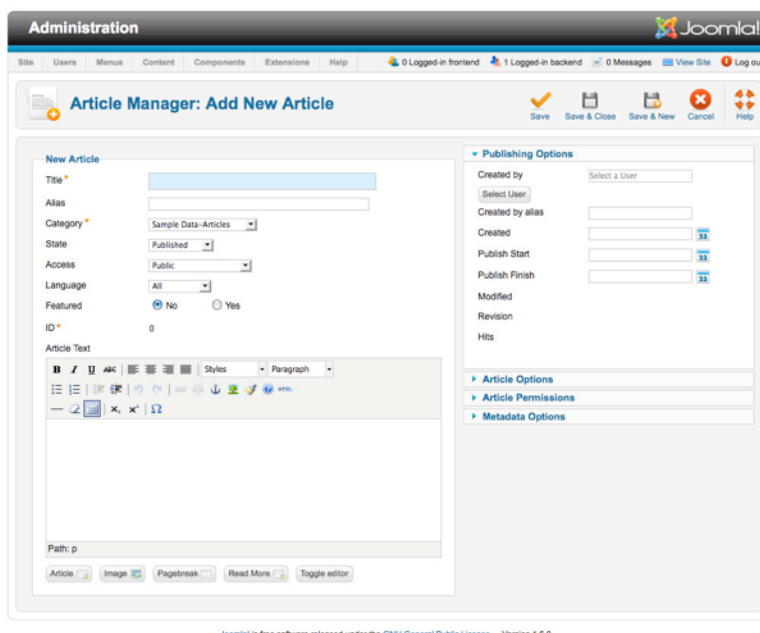


Figure 2: Article edit form

Inserting an image from a URL

As a first example we are going to use an already existing image on the web.

For example, this one: http://farm2.static.flickr.com/1198/898250237_78a0e75cba_m.jpg
(Figure 3)



Figure 3: Example image

Move the cursor to the position in the text at which you would like to insert the image. Click on the image icon in the editor toolbar and paste the URL of the image to the pop-up window. Configure the image with a left alignment and use 10 pixels vertical and horizontal space (Figure 4).

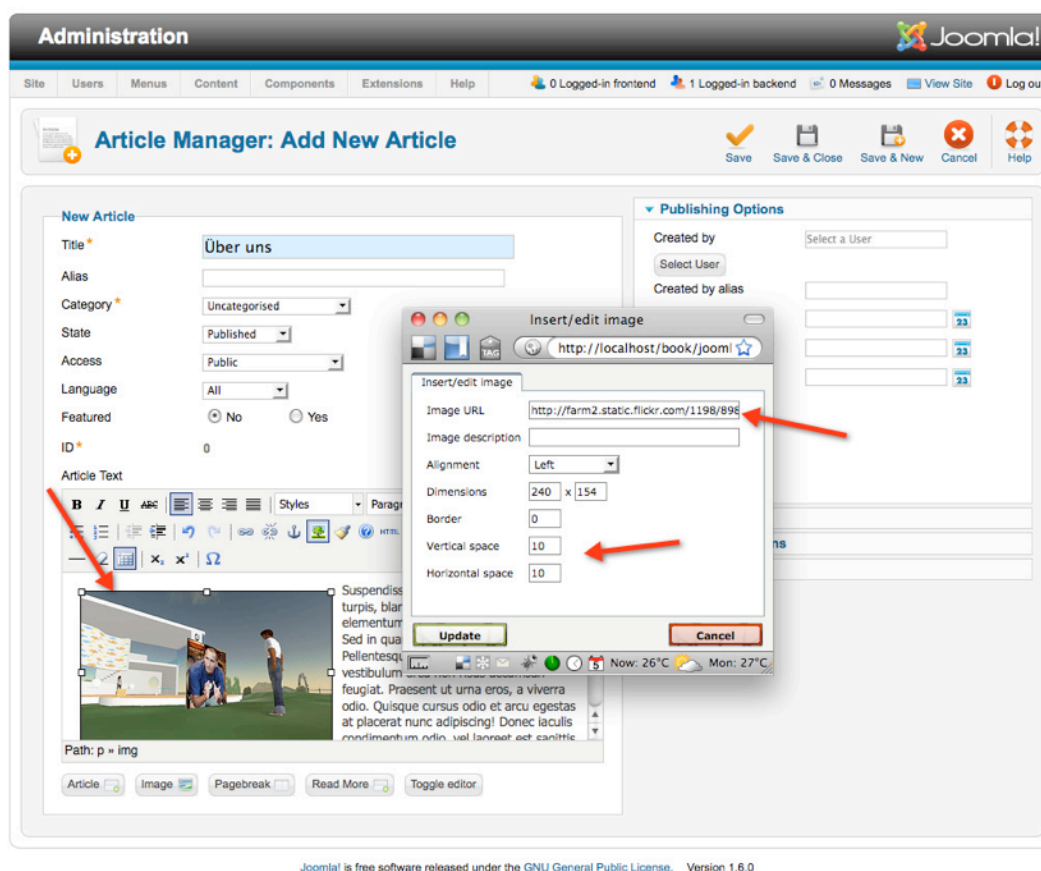


Figure 4: Insert image

The image will appear in your editor window. Click *Save* and your item is stored. There are several ways to save it:

- *Save* - Item is saved. Form is not closed. Used for saving when you still want to continue working.
- *Save & Close* - Item is saved and form will be closed.
- *Save & New* - Item is saved, form will be closed and a new empty article form is called.
- Exit the form.

Step 2 - Creating a Menu Link

The post has been created but is not appearing on the website. For it to appear, we need a link! Click the *New* icon in the *Menu manager* in the top menu (*Menu* → *Top*). Click the 'Select' button next to the field *Menu item type*. A window with various links will pop up. Click on the link *single article* (Figure 5).

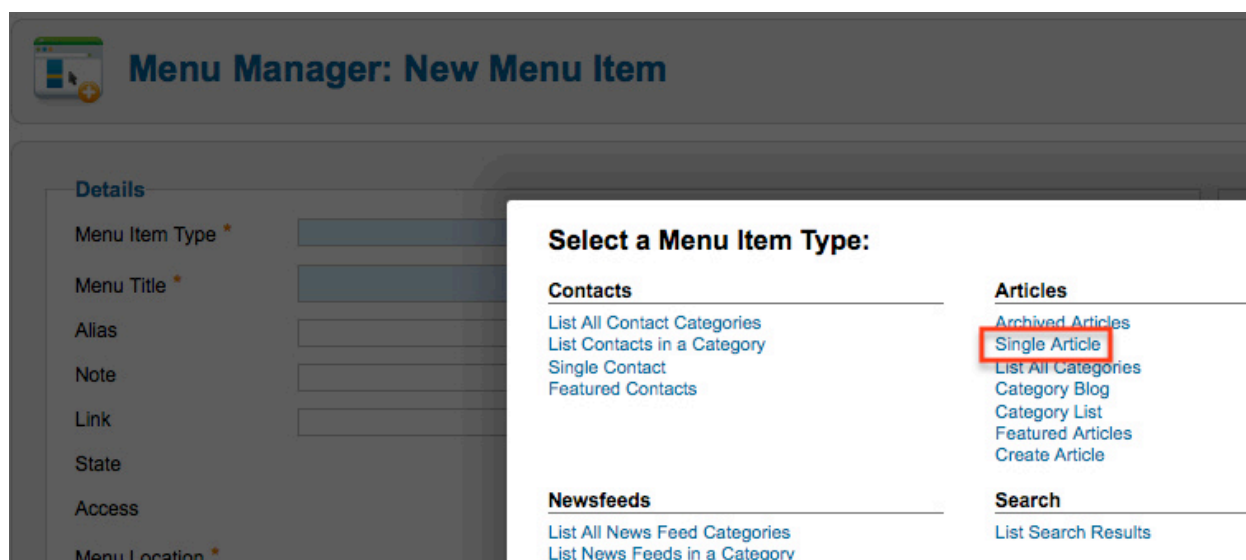


Figure 5: Assign an article to a menu item

Now you need to choose the desired article. Click the button *Select / Change* in the right pane (Select Article) to select it. You will see a search box with all articles. In case you can't find your article on the page right away, you can filter the list by typing a part of the article's title in the search box and then clicking on the title of the correct article in the result list (Figure 6).

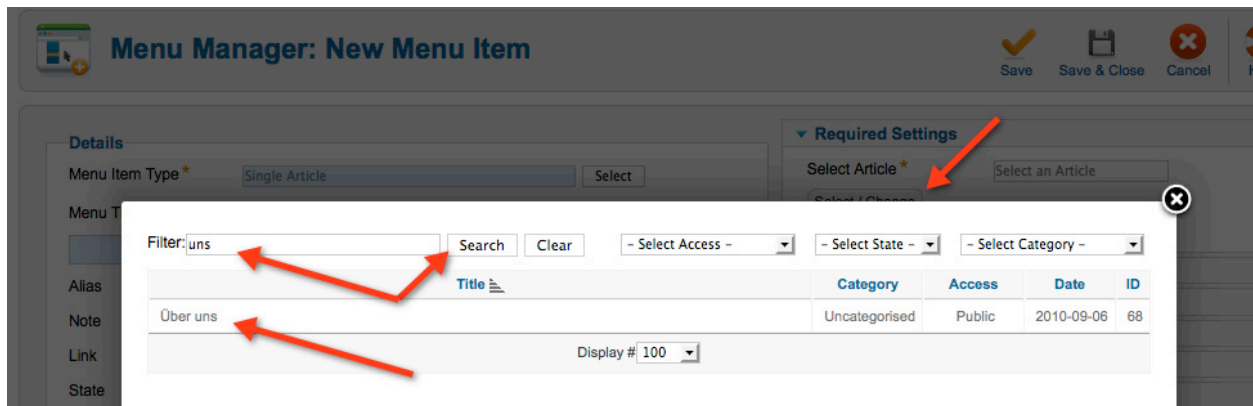


Figure 6: Menu type - single article - select article

Enter a title for the link "About us" and make sure that *top* is selected in the *menu location*. We can leave the remaining options with their settings for now.

Step 3 - 'About us' on the website

If you now load the frontend website, you will discover the new link in the top menu. Click it and you will see the *about us* content - congratulations on having created your first page (Figure 7).



Figure 7: About us page

Step 4 - Image Upload

If your image is not already available on the Internet, you will need to upload it from your PC. Let's go through the example together. Go to the *Article Manager* (*Content* → *Article manager*). If you can't find your article, locate it easily by using the search box. Select the article's title and the edit form will open. Delete the linked image from the text.

Below the editor window you will find the *Image* button. This button launches a dialog box to upload an image. You can choose between existing images or upload new ones (*Figure 8*).

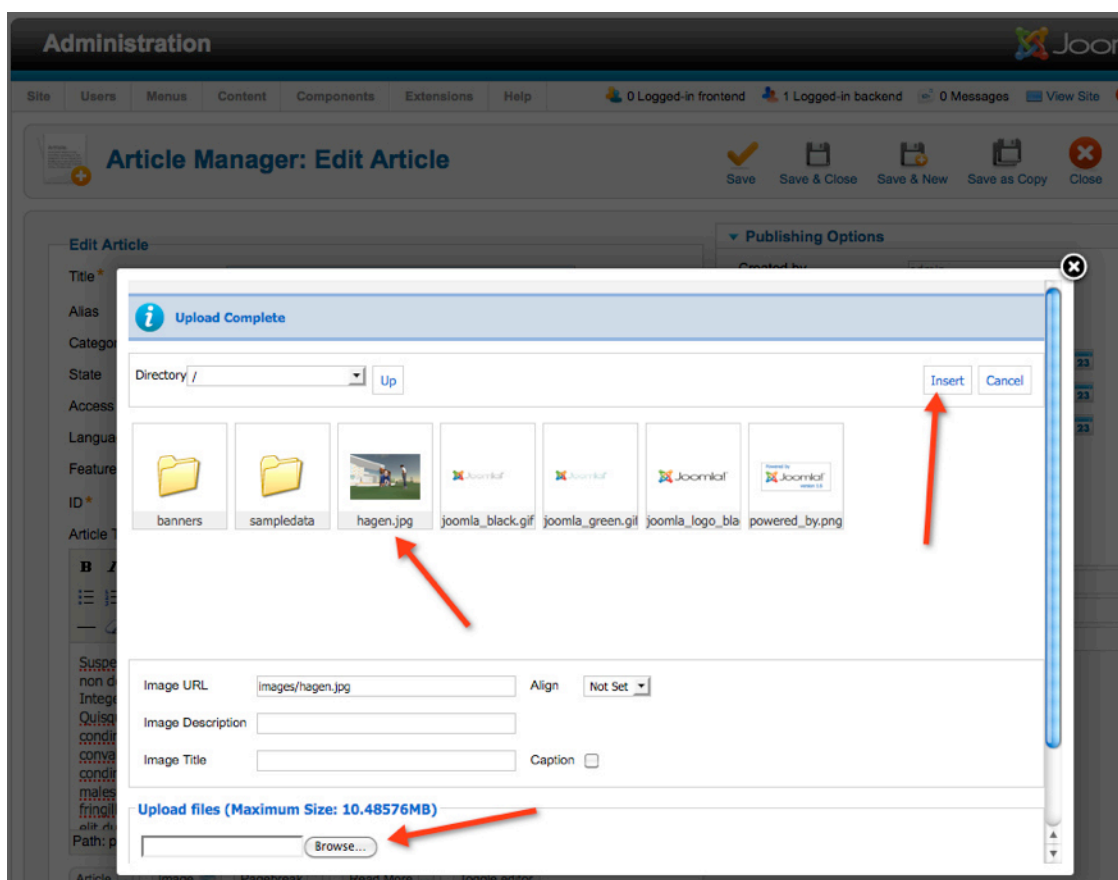


Figure 8: Image upload

Once the image has been inserted into the text, the formatting can be changed by using the *image icon* in the editor's toolbar. This separation of functions in Joomla! was purposely chosen because you have the possibility to use different editors. The Joomla! *Image* button will always remain the same but the image formatting in the editor might differ.

Attention: Joomla! uses the images as they are. The images will not be resized!

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A TYPICAL ARTICLE

The following items usually have to be taken into consideration when it comes to creating an article on your website:

- a text with one or more images
- a teaser text for list views with a *read more* link pointing to the full article page
- the article should appear on the front page and needs no menu link
- nice to have: a scheduled publication date
- nice to have: a printer-friendly version for visitors who would like to print the article
- nice to have: an option to forward the article by email

Start

The article should appear on the front page of your website. If you deleted, did not install or change your sample data, your Joomla! front page will look like the one in *Figure 1*. It is, of course, not a bad thing if posts should appear. :-)

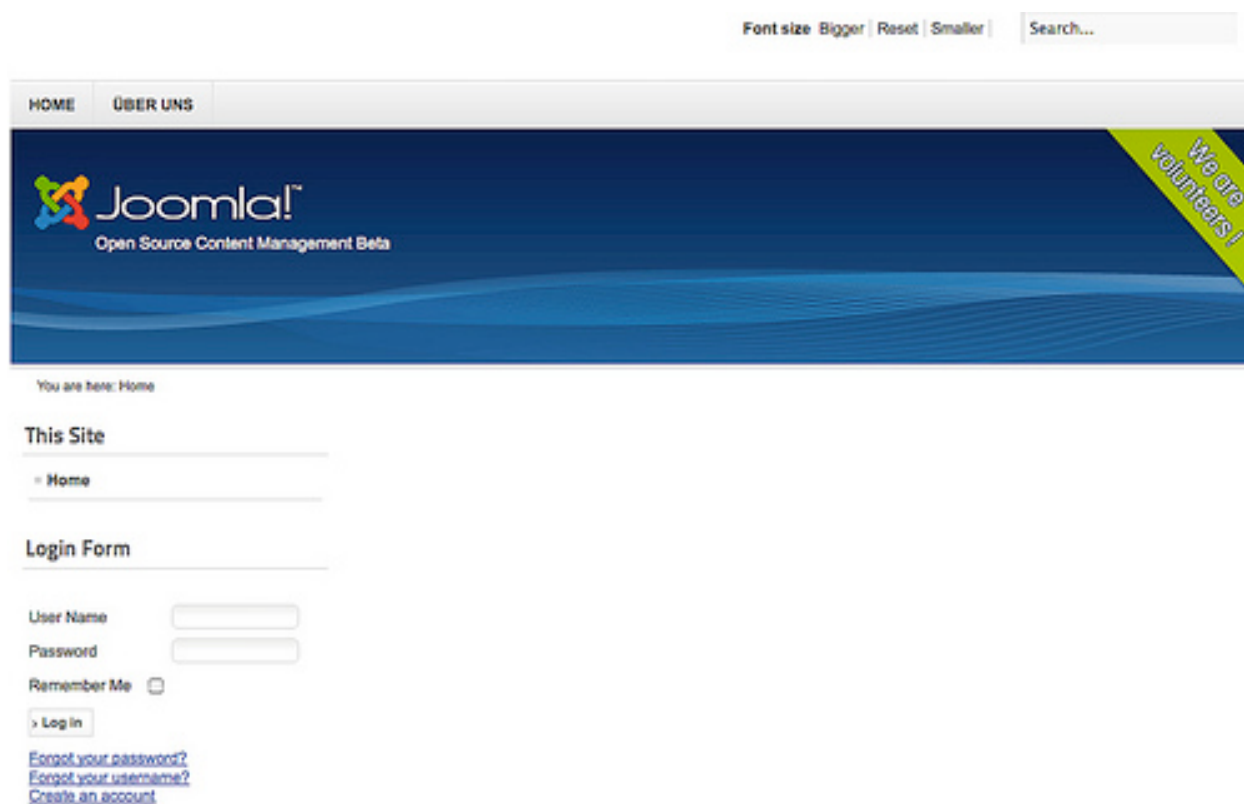


Figure 1: Empty website

When you log into the administration area, you will see an icon called *Add New Article*. You may either click on this icon or access the form via the main navigation *Content* → *Article Manager* → *Add New Article* (*Figure 2*)

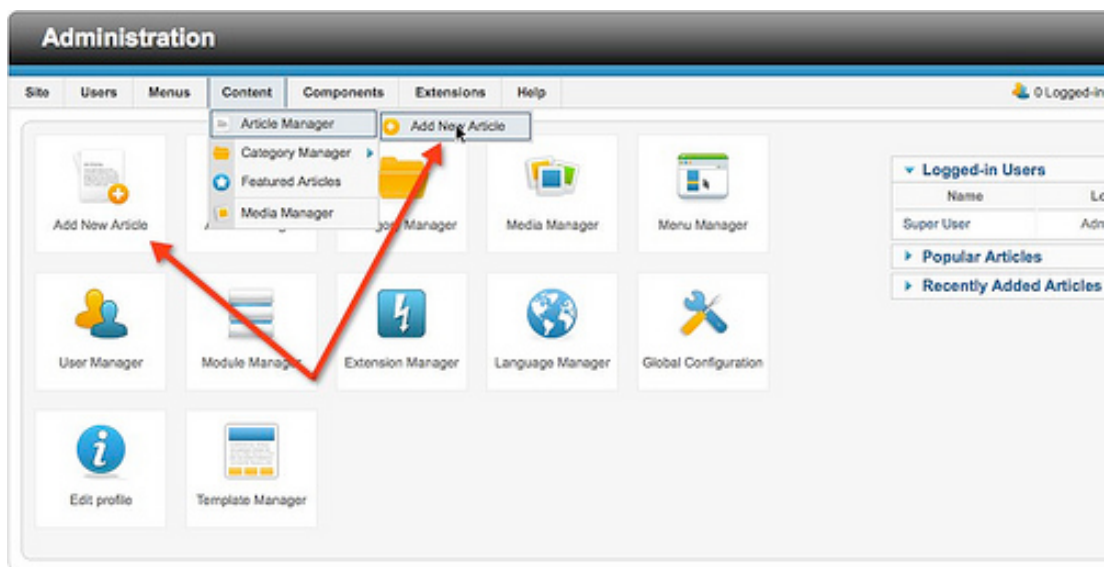


Figure 2: Administration area

Article form

You are now in the article form, in which you will probably write all articles you will ever write in Joomla!. A very important place! The form is structured as in *Figure 3*.

Figure 3: Entry form for contributions

The minimum requirement for an article is a title (1), a category (2), and a text (3). If you look at the form more closely, you will notice the help texts that appear when you move the mouse across the description of a field. I have marked the areas in the form in *Figure 3* with six digits.

Title

The most important part is the **title** or headline. The title appears as a headline on the website (usually in the biggest size of the HTML headline tags <h1>) and in the browser bar at the top (*you can enable or disable this behavior*). The title is the foundation for the alias field below. The alias is automatically generated by Joomla! when you save the article and the way it looks is configurable as well. Basically, the purpose of an alias is to have a simple, short and legible URL in the browser address bar, which can easily be used in e-mails or chats as well. In the example of <http://example.com/first-article> - *first-article* is the alias.

Category

This is about the classification or **categorization** of the article. Every item **MUST** be assigned to a **category**. If you explicitly do not want to categorize the article, you can assign the category *uncategorized*. This is especially useful for more static content pages like *legal notices* and the *About Us* page. In this area, other important attributes can be configured, including *State* (*published or not*), who has *Access* (*Access, Permission depends on various settings*), *Language* and *Featured*. *Featured* replaces the former attribute *frontpage* and ensures that the items are in a predefined blog layout for your website frontpage. The article *ID* is created after saving and consists of a serial number.

Text

In this section you can write your text, which should be of value to your audience . Sounds really easy, doesn't it?! :-)

Technically, you are dealing with a WYSIWYG editor (*What You See Is What You Get*) here. The editor converts your written text into HTML text format. Joomla! uses the **TinyMCE**²⁴ editor as default configuration. TinyMCE is an independent open source project, which has so many functions that you could write a separate book about it. (*May not be a bad idea.*)

It basically works like any other word processor: write text, highlight text, then click on a toolbar icon and the function is applied or a dialog box opens.

The buttons below the input area are unusual and can be confusing at times. These buttons are Joomla! specific and only have an indirect relationship with the editor. The Joomla! core comes with five of these very practical additional buttons.

You can add more buttons by adding Joomla! extensions:

1. **Article:** allows you to link to other existing Joomla! articles
2. **Image:** You can insert an existing image or photo from the *Media Manager* or upload a new image.
3. **Pagebreak:** inserts a pagebreak in your article

²⁴ <http://tinymce.moxiecode.com/>

4. **Read More:** allows you to stipulate where to place the *read more* link
5. **Toggle Editor:** switches the editor on and off. If it is off, you will see the HTML code of your article.

Options

What was called *Parameter* in Joomla! 1.5, is now called *Options* in Joomla! 1.6, like, for example, the *Publishing Options*. Here you can specify who wrote the article (*Created by*). The user who created the article is usually allowed and responsible for making changes to the article later. Which name is really shown below the title at the webpage is configured in *Created by Alias*. The three fields below allow you to schedule the publishing. Simply enter the appropriate dates and Joomla! takes care of the rest.

More Options

In this section you can configure many options by switching them on and off. You can change the article layout to suit the reader's and search engine's needs. Just start experimenting - it's the best way to learn.

30. The sixth and final area concerns the permissions for this article. This selection will help us in many places in Joomla! 1.6 and I will cover this in chapter Users and [Permissions](#).

SAMPLE ARTICLE

Let's create the article outlined above together:

A text with one or more images

Just write your text. To add an image or images, there are numerous possibilities:

1. The image is already available online, for example, on Flickr²⁵.

In this case, click the *image* icon in the editor toolbar and copy the image URL to the dialog box.

2. The image is already in the Joomla! *Media Manager*.

In this case, click the *image* **button** below to select the image and insert it into your text (*Figure 4*).

²⁵ <http://www.flickr.com/photos/hagengraf/5186325015/sizes/s/>

MEDIA MANAGER

The media manager is Joomla!'s little Digital Asset Management System (DAM)²⁶. If you are managing content, you will need a place to store the files. Files are all the images, PDFs and whatever you decide to mention in your content. Usually these digital assets consist of the file and additional meta data. In this case, we need an easy-to-use tool to manage our files. Let's have a look at what is possible with the Joomla! core media manager.

How it works

To me it looks more like a file manager. Everyone knows the Windows explorer or the OSX finder. In Joomla! they call it "media manager". It has a base directory where all the files are stored. You can look at your files in two different ways using your browser: via a *Thumbnail View* (Figure 1) and a *Detailed View* (Figure 2). It is possible to navigate through the folders by clicking on them.

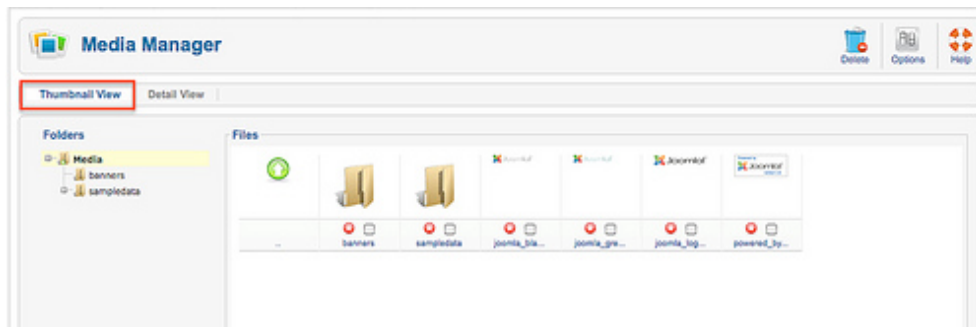


Figure 1: Media Manager - Thumbnail View

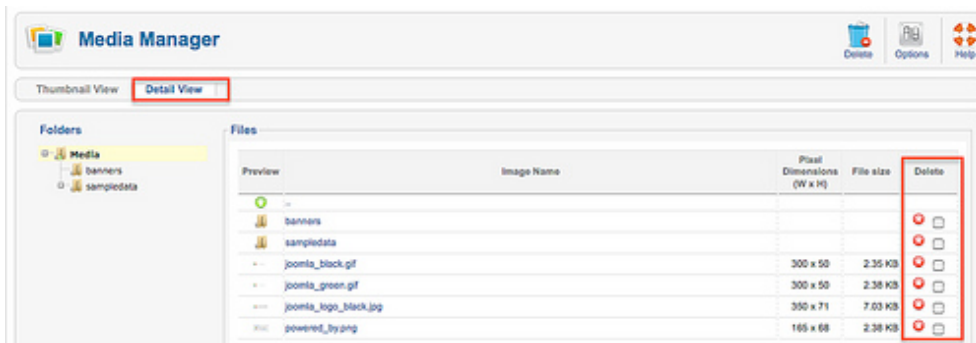


Figure 2: Media Manager - Detailed View

You can create as many additional folders as you wish. In the *Detailed View*, you are able to delete folders and files. You'll find the same structure in the Joomla! administration backend as you can see in your FTP client (Figure 3), but you have to be careful: In core Joomla! you will also find a *media* directory. This directory is NOT the home of the media manager. The home of the media manager in core Joomla! is the *images* directory.

²⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_asset_management

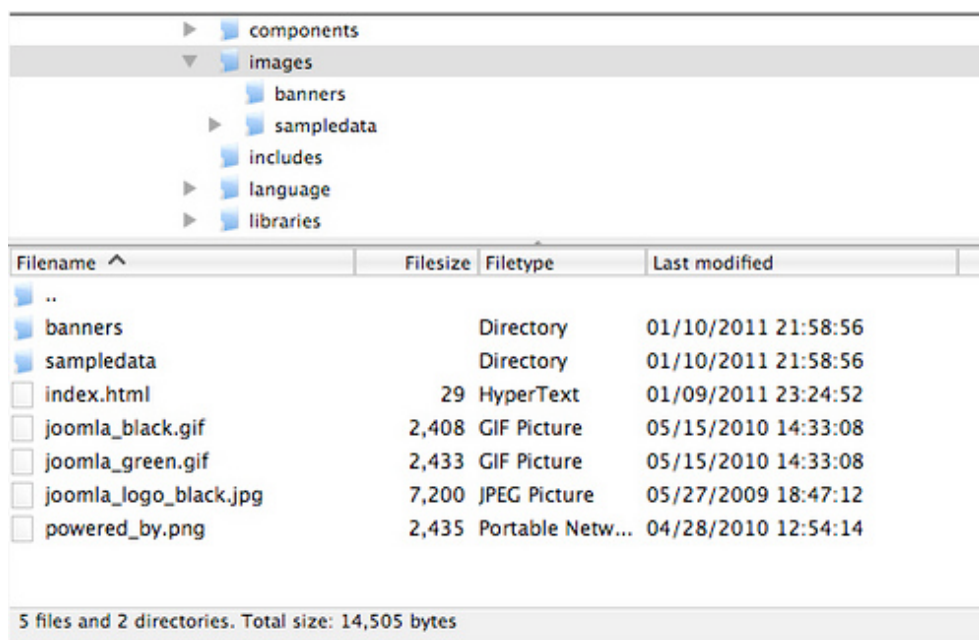


Figure 3: Media manager directory in ftp client

When you look in the toolbar you will discover the Options icon - go ahead and click on it (Figure 4).

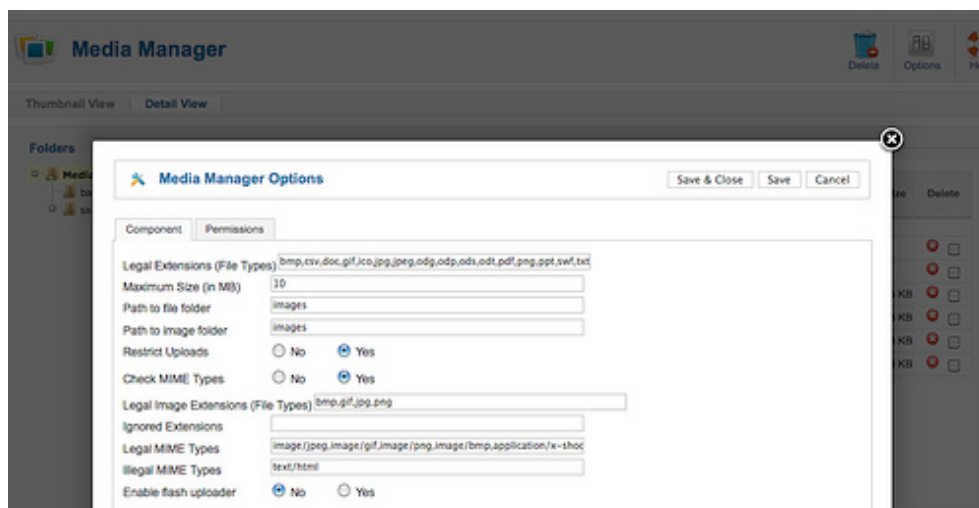


Figure 4: Media manager options

If you go through the options, you will notice that you can limit file types by extension, maximum size of a file and you can also separate *images* from *files*. Well, an image is a file, too, but I like the idea of separating them. The thumbnail view, e.g., makes a lot more sense for images but not for non-image files. The biggest advantage of that separation is the possibility to *Restrict Uploads* to users lower than the manager role. You can allow registered users to upload images but you do not have to give permission to upload other files. This is, in some cases, very useful. The

next options you see are MIME²⁷ types, nowadays often called *Internet Media Type*. If you are a Windows user, you usually only distinguish different file types by their extension. *Internet Media Type* is another way to recognize the type of a file even without a file extension. You can permit or forbid as many file types as desired.

The **Flash Uploader** is one of the most sophisticated features that is often forgotten about. In Joomla! 1.5 it didn't always work properly but the version coming with Joomla! 1.7 is excellent for uploading more than one file at a time. The *Flash Uploader* simply works and is easy to use! Try it! (Figure 5).

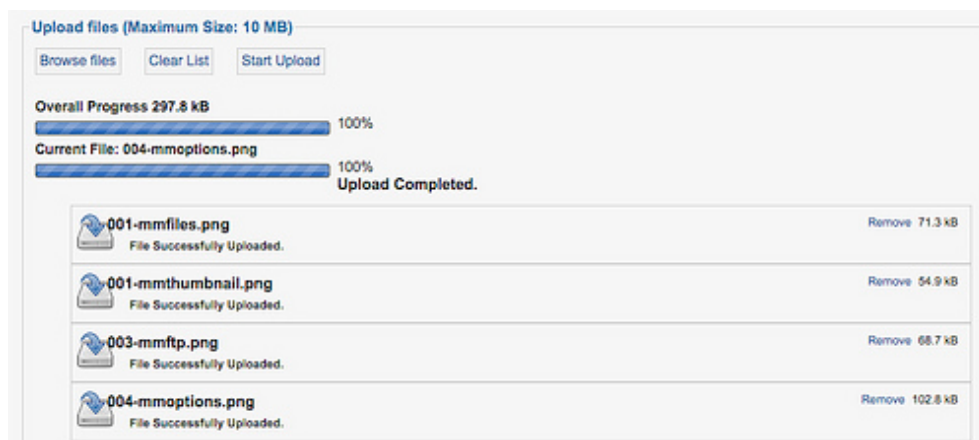


Figure 5: Media manager Flash Uploader

As you notice, the Joomla! media manager is no rocket science²⁸ but it is a reliable, easy to use tool to manage your images and other files.

If you need a more sophisticated product, Joomla! offers other solutions in the extension directory in the category File Management ²⁹.

Media manager and the editor

Now you know about the central place of your files but how can you manage to connect them to your content?

Anywhere you see an editor in Joomla!, it is usually possible to add media from the media manager by clicking the image button below. We have already talked about this in Chapter [A Typical Article](#) (Figure 6).

²⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mime_type

²⁸ <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=rocket+science>

²⁹ <http://extensions.joomla.org/extensions/core-enhancements/file-management>

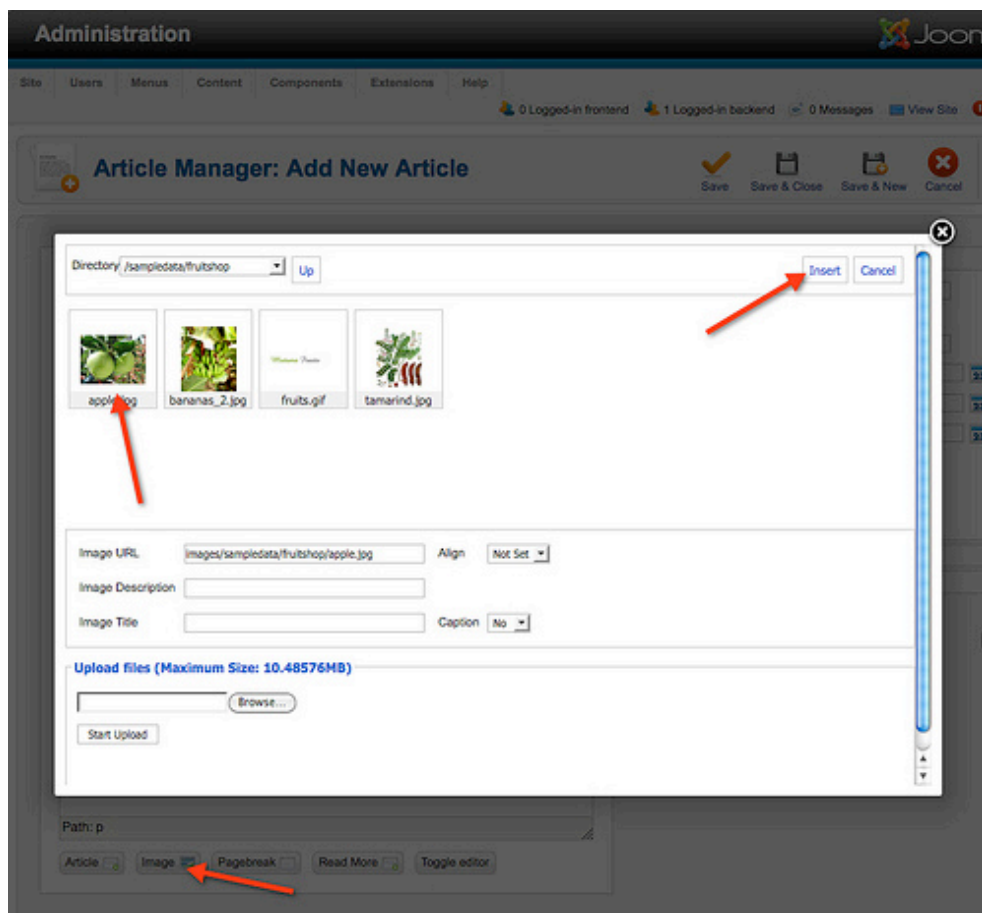


Figure 6: Media manager in content areas

Media Manager in other places

There are other places where the media manager plays a role, like in categories. It is possible to link an image to a category (Figure 7).

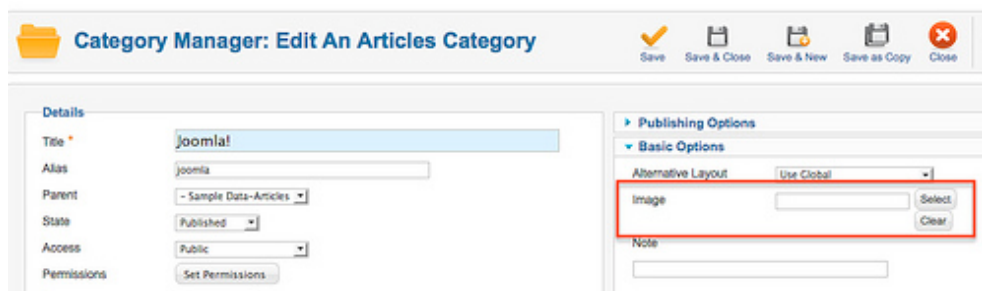


Figure 7: Media manager in category

This image will appear in a list of categories if you configure it in the *Menu Items Options*.

CONTACT FORM

With a contact form the following question arises: "Is this content?". I think it is and have, therefore, written it as a sub chapter of the [Managing Content](#) chapter.

On a contact form it first becomes obvious that something like a CMS is being used. Manually created HTML pages cannot send emails as this requires a script language like PHP, for example, and a configured server. PHP scripts can be embedded as contact forms into HTML pages, but then that part of the website will often look different from the rest of the site. In Joomla! the contact form is already integrated and you "only" have to configure it.

Usually, if your Joomla! is running on a web server at your provider, you won't have problems with sending emails. Locally, it's a bit more difficult because you would have to set up a mail server first. Generally, this is not a problem but it isn't really necessary. ;-)

Joomla! sends emails in different ways. You will see an overview of this in *Global Configuration* → *Server* (Figure 1). Naturally, you would use the standard activated PHP Mail function (read more: [Website and Content Configuration](#)).

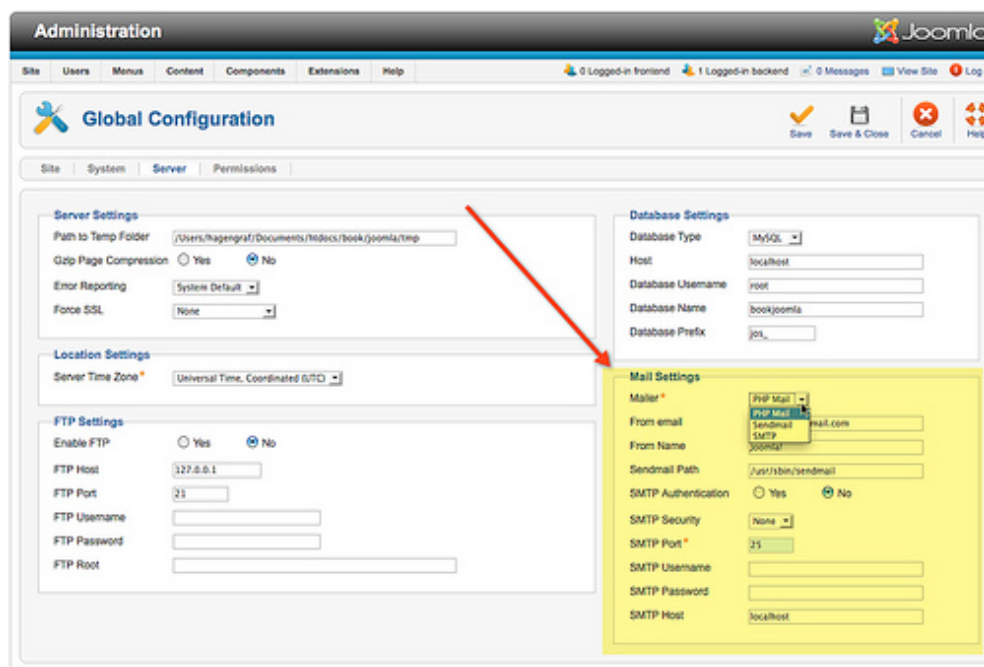
The image is a screenshot of the Joomla! Administration interface, specifically the 'Global Configuration' page under the 'Server' tab. The interface is divided into several sections: 'Server Settings', 'Location Settings', 'FTP Settings', 'Database Settings', and 'Mail Settings'. The 'Mail Settings' section is highlighted with a yellow background. A red arrow points from the 'Mail Settings' section to the 'Database Settings' section. The 'Mail Settings' section contains fields for 'Mailer' (set to 'PHP Mail'), 'From email' (set to 'joomla@localhost'), 'From Name' (set to 'Joomla!'), 'Sendmail Path' (set to '/usr/sbin/sendmail'), 'SMTP Authentication' (set to 'No'), 'SMTP Security' (set to 'None'), 'SMTP Port' (set to '25'), 'SMTP Username' (empty), 'SMTP Password' (empty), and 'SMTP Host' (set to 'localhost'). The 'Database Settings' section contains fields for 'Database Type' (set to 'MySQL'), 'Host' (set to 'localhost'), 'Database Username' (set to 'root'), 'Database Name' (set to 'bookjoomla'), and 'Database Prefix' (set to 'jos_').

Figure 1: Mail Server Settings

Creating a contact

In order to include a contact on your site you need at least:

- a contact category
- a contact
- a link in a menu

Maybe you still have a category from the example data (*Sample-data contact*). If not, go ahead and create one. In the next step you will create a new contact. To do so, open *Components* → *Contacts* in your administration area and click on the icon *New*. Then fill in the appearing form (Figure 2). I have labeled some areas in the screenshot for better orientation.

Figure 2: Create contact

1. The first and last name of the contact person, or the name of the department or company if it is not a person. The contact can be connected with an existing user account. He has to be assigned to a category, should be public (*State = Published*) and presumably not appear on the frontpage (*Featured = No*).
2. The text area can be used for additional information, e.g. opening hours or jurisdiction.
3. The *Publishing Options* relate to the user who can later make changes to that content, who created the content, and the timing for publishing. The latter is used rather seldomly for 'normal' websites.
4. In *Contact Details* there are numerous fields available, which you can choose to fill in or leave blank.
5. In *Display Options* you decide which fields will be displayed. This area is important as you specify here whether a contact form will be shown or not (*Show Contact Form*). You can also specify whether the sender should receive an email copy and you'll be able to configure some spam protection settings (*Banned E-Mail*, *Banned Subject*, etc). Against "real" spammers, however, this protection is rather "pathetic".

6. In the field *Contact Redirect*, you can enter another email adress to which the contents of the form should be sent.
7. The Metadata Options are, like the Publishing Options, available on each single page (Read more: [Search engine optimization](#)).

Creating a menu item

You now have a contact but still no form on your website. That is exactly what we are going to create in this next step. Due to the fact that you can link nestable categories to contacts, you may either have a single contact form or many of them. It is definitely possible to create a contact form for each employee of a big company like Volkswagen (approx. 370,000 employees). How does such a dynamic CMS display this on a website?

To manage this, Joomla! has its own *Menu Manager* with different layouts. In the *Menu Manager*, you get to decide whether you want to have a list of contacts or categories or just a single contact form. At first glance this may seem somewhat confusing but it is well thought out and helpful.

Let's link a single form in the menu for the contact we have just created. Open *Menus - Top* and click the *New* icon. You need three things for a menu link:

1. the *Menu Item Type* (type of link) for displaying the site and, depending on your choice, a contact or a category
2. a text displayed as a link
3. the menu, in which the link should appear

For number 1, click on the *Select* button next to the field *Menu Item Type*. A window will open and you will see a choice of types. Click *Single Contact* (Figure 3).

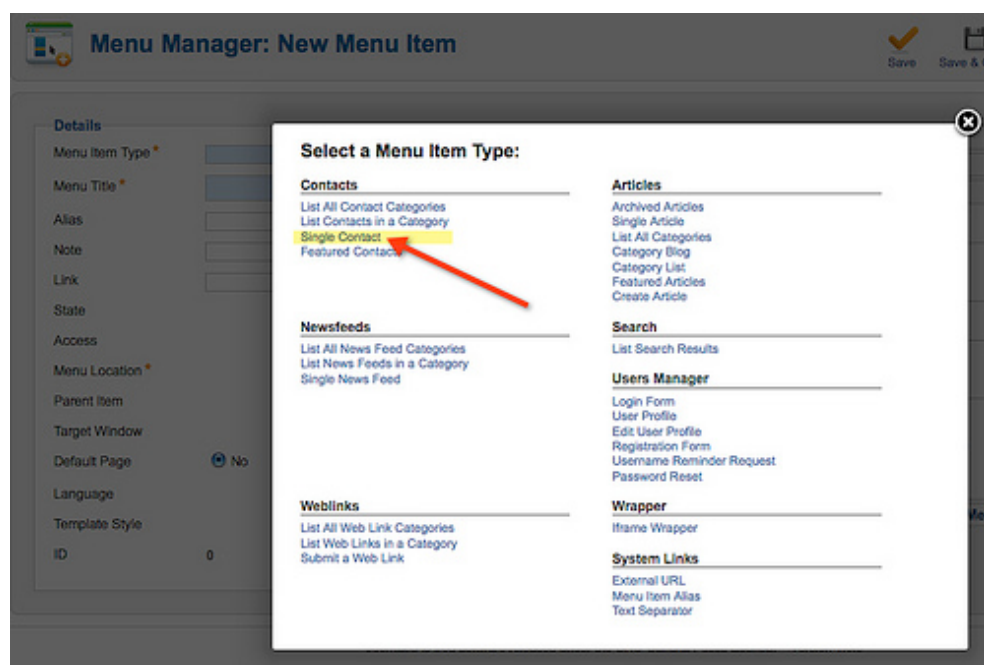
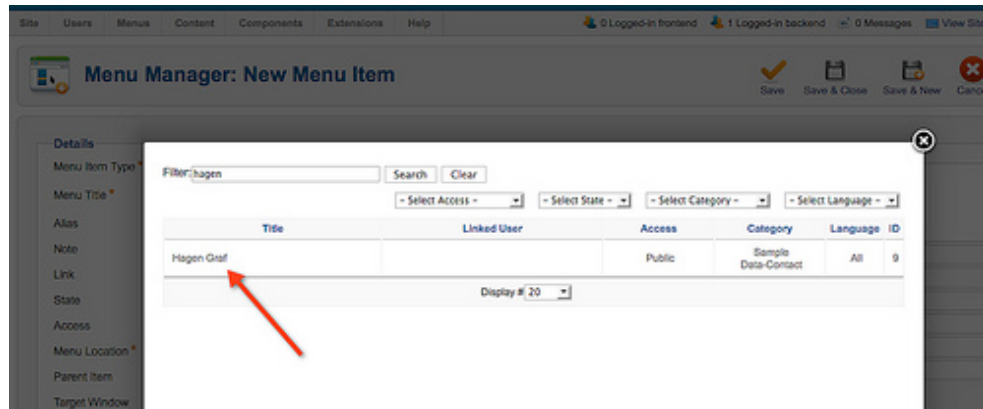
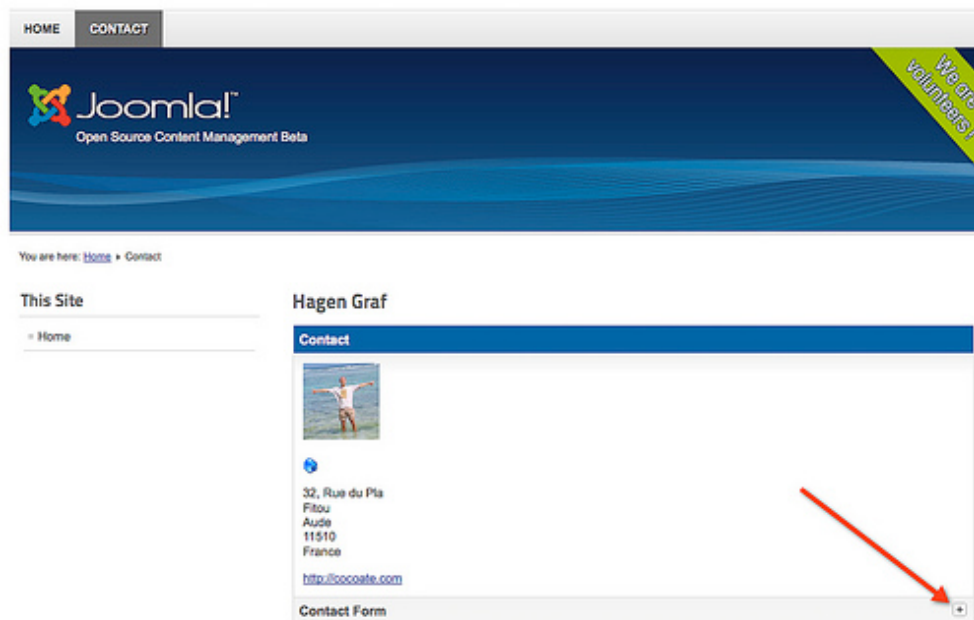


Figure 3: Choice of menu types

The window will close again. Since you only want one contact, you will now have to choose the contact in *Required Settings* (Figure 4).

*Figure 4: Choose contact*

At last, insert the text for the link (*Menu Title*) and then save everything. The menu is already registered correctly by opening the form. On your website, an additional link in the *Top Menu* should be appearing, which is linked to the corresponding contact (Figure 5). You can get to the actual contact form by clicking the plus sign in the right field. Now you can send messages via your website.

*Figure 5: Contact at website*



The screenshot displays the Joomla! 1.7 user interface. At the top is a blue header with the Joomla! logo and the text "Open Source Content Management Beta". A yellow banner in the top right corner reads "We are Joomla! 1.7". Below the header, a breadcrumb trail shows "You are here: Home > Contact". On the left, a sidebar titled "This Site" contains a link to "Home". The main content area is titled "Hagen Graf" and contains a "Contact" window. Inside this window is a "Contact Form" with the following fields: "Name", "Email*", "Subject", and "Message:". The "Name", "Email*", and "Subject" fields are marked as required with an asterisk and the word "Required". Below these fields is a checkbox labeled "Send copy to yourself" and a "Send Email" button.

Figure 6: Contact form

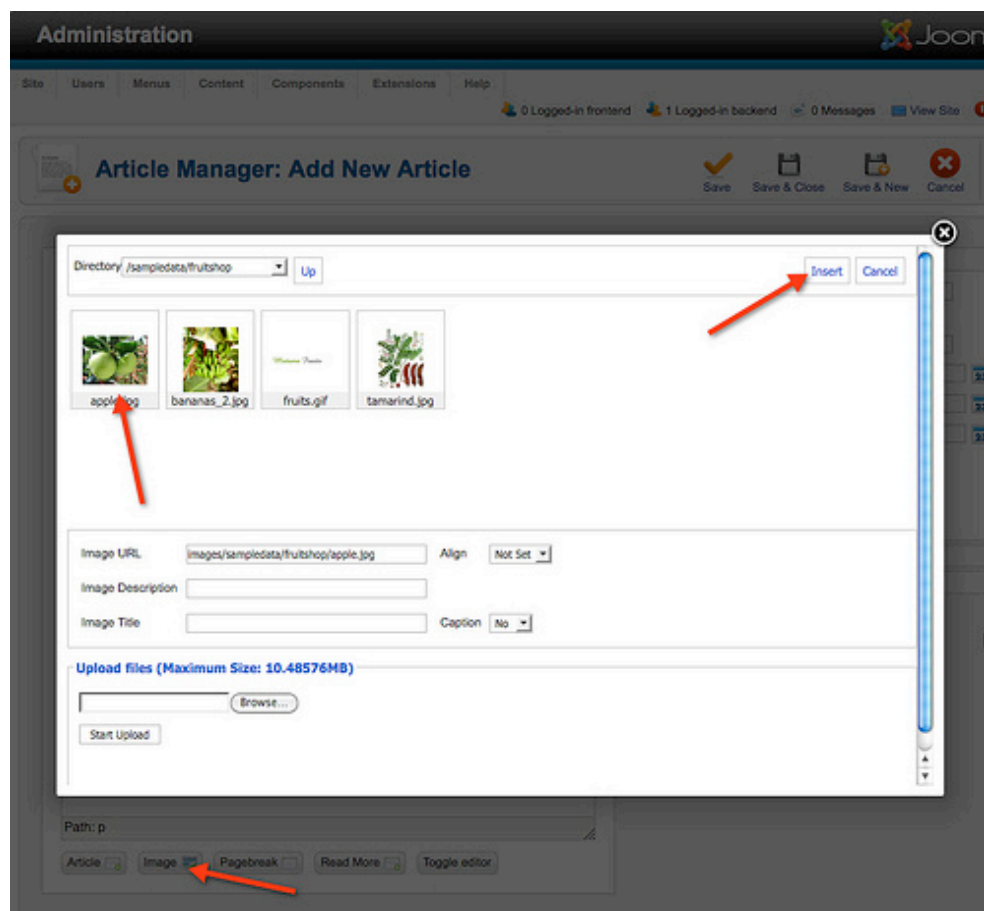


Figure 4: Insert Image from media field

3. The picture is on your hard disk.

This is the most complex case. Basically, you will also use the image button below the text. There you will find an upload dialogue through which you can upload your image "easily". Remember that Joomla! will **NOT** resize the image. If you upload a photo from your digital camera, it will be displayed in its full original size (width > 3000 pixels). **You have to resize the image before uploading.**

If all goes well - congratulations!

If it doesn't work, this could be due to many things, such as lack of permissions in the directories of the media manager. At best, you will get an error message.

Once you have inserted the image from the media, you can select and format it by clicking the image icon in the editor's toolbar.

A teaser text for list views with a read more link to the full article

This is easy. Move the cursor to the position at which the *read more* link should appear and click on the *read more* button below the text area.

The article should appear on the frontpage and needs no menu link

Select *Yes* in the field *Featured* in Area 2.

A scheduled publication would be nice

Avoid this at first, so you don't have to wait for the article to appear on your website :-). If you would like to try it later with a different article, simply fill the fields *Start Publishing* and *Finish Publishing* with the appropriate information or select the dates by clicking the calendar icon.

A printer-friendly version of the article

If you do not know at this point where the global settings are located, have a look at the chapter Website and Content Configuration and verify the current settings. In area 5, you may switch the Show Printer icon to 'show'.

Forwarding of the article by e-mail

Simply set the options in area 5, switch the *Show Email Icon* to *show*.

RESULT

After saving you can reload your site and will see your article on the frontpage as in *Figure 5*.



Figure 5: Article on the frontpage

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Chapter 7

Structure Your Content with Categories

Joomla! articles can be categorized. Generally spoken, categorization is the process of recognizing, differentiating and understanding something through abstraction. This may sound rather complicated but proves very useful when managing several articles.

Joomla! offers the possibility of creating as many categories as you wish. It is possible to build nested categories and an article can be related to one of these categories.

Newspapers, for example, use categories to better differentiate between their articles. Here is an example from a Joomla! template³⁰ (*Figure 1*).

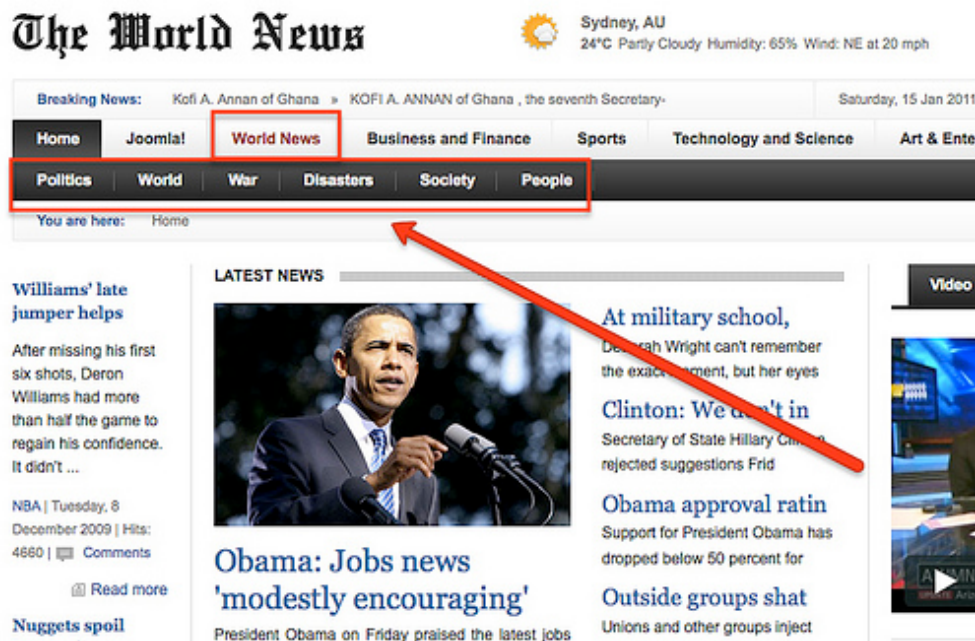


Figure 1: Gavick Template December 2009

They are using the category *World News* and under this category there are additional categories like *Politics*, *World*, *War*, *Disasters* and *more*. Sometimes two levels are sufficient like in this example; sometimes you may need more. In Joomla! 1.5 it was not possible to have more than

³⁰ <http://demo.gavick.com/joomla15/dec2009/>

two levels. With Joomla! 1. you can have as many levels as you want. Joomla! no longer has sections - only categories.

In the *Category Manager* (*Administration* → *Content* → *Category Manager*), you can manage your category tree and filter up to 10 levels (*Figure 2*).

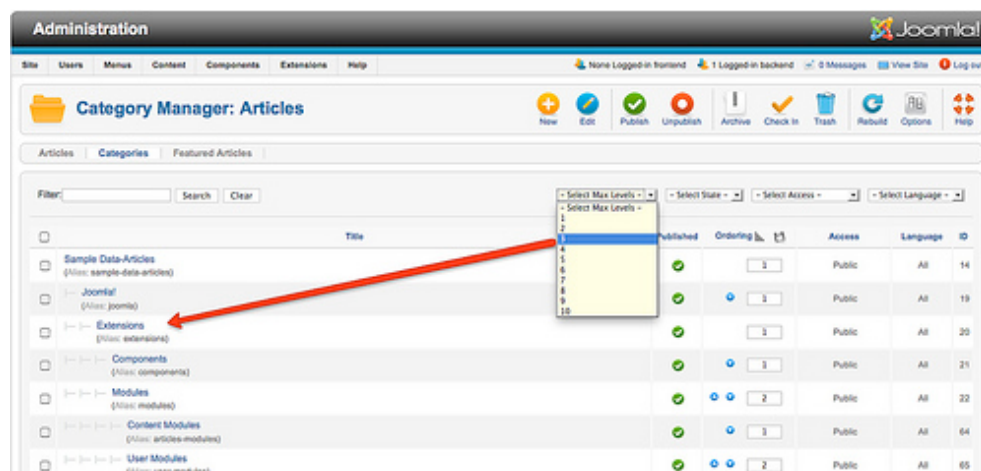


Figure 2: Category Manager

Like an article, a category consists of a title, a description and many other attributes and options. It can have an additional image that can be used in different layouts. The image can be selected in the basic settings. A category can also contain images in the description (*Figure 3*).

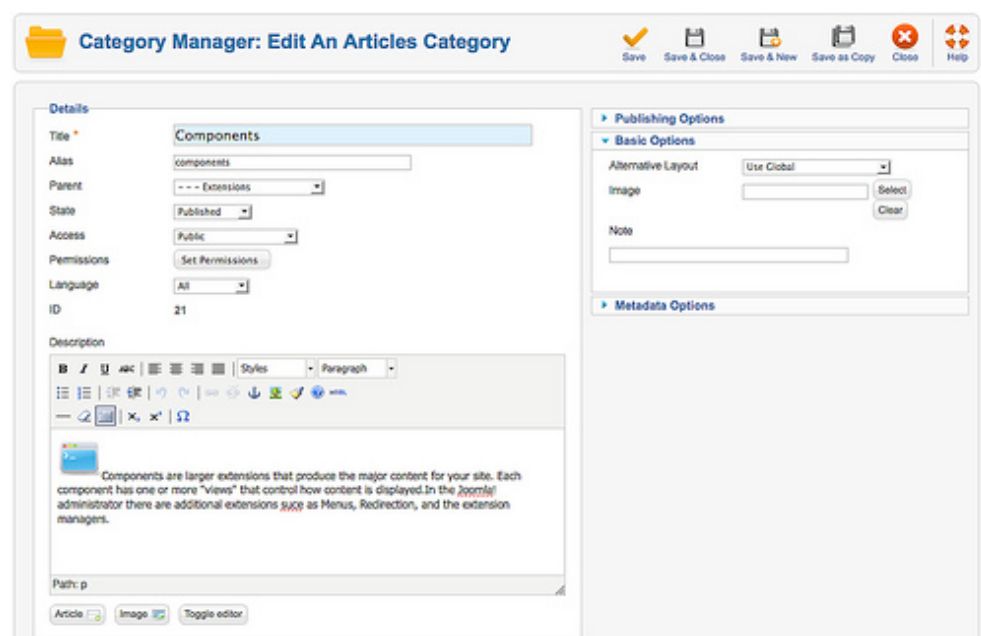


Figure 3: Category Edit Form

When you access your Joomla! website you can see exactly these categories in the example data. The navigation uses links to the categories to show all the articles and sub categories (*Figure 4*). Even the breadcrumb navigation reflects this structure.

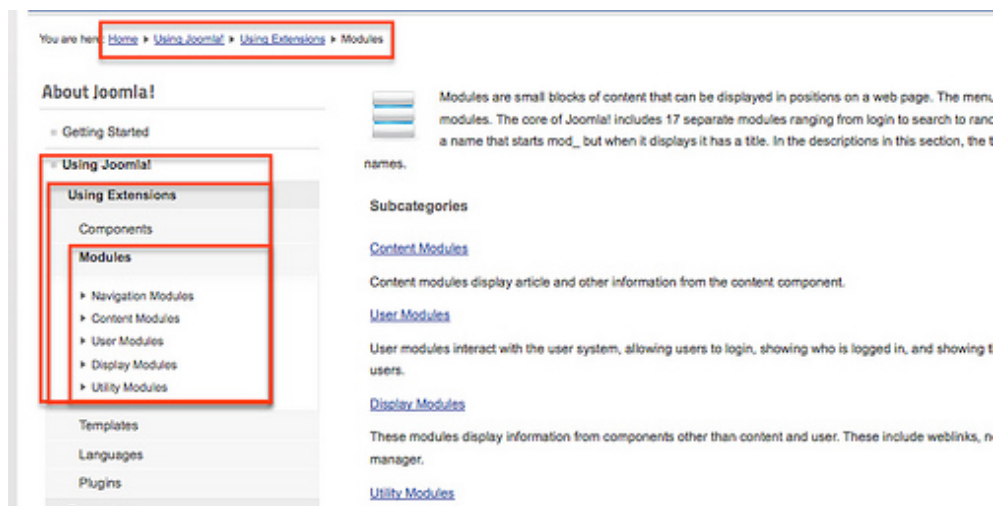


Figure 4: Categories as menu links on the website

In the *Menu Manager* (*Administration* → *Menu* → *About Joomla!*), you can see these menu items, which link to the articles in a category (*Figure 5*).

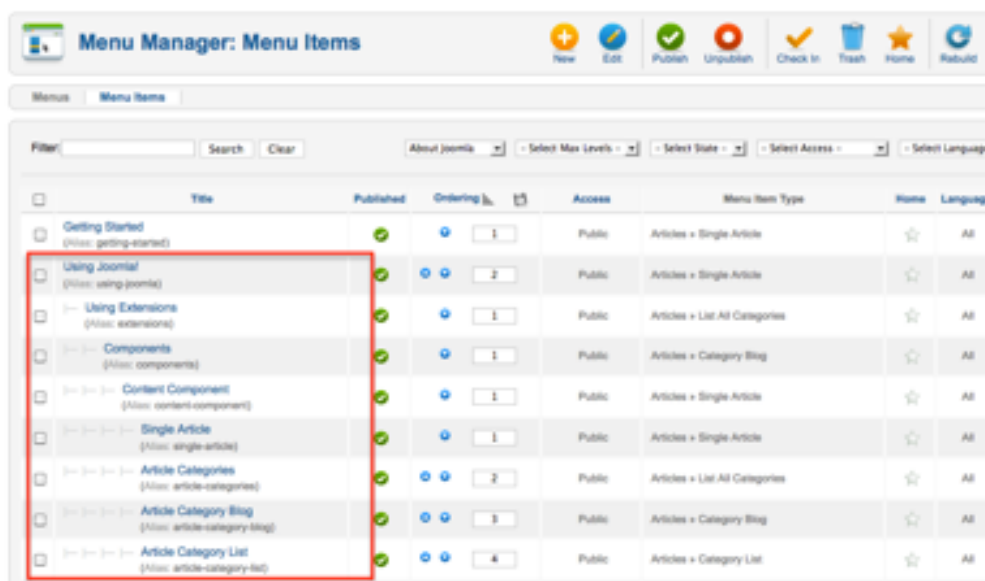


Figure 5: Categories as menu links on the website

You can choose from different layouts for the articles. In *Figure 5* you can see which layout is used for which link. You can select the layout in the edit form of a menu item (*Figure 6*).

Possible layouts:

- a list of all categories

- a blog layout (like on the frontpage)
- a category list

Depending on the layout you have plenty of options to configure the appearance and behavior of sub categories and articles.

Select a Menu Item Type:

Contacts

[List All Contact Categories](#)
[List Contacts in a Category](#)
[Single Contact](#)
[Featured Contacts](#)

Articles

[Archived Articles](#)
[Single Article](#)
[List All Categories](#)
[Category Blog](#)
[Category List](#)
[Featured Articles](#)
[Create Article](#)

Newsfeeds

[List All News Feed Categories](#)
[List News Feeds in a Category](#)
[Single News Feed](#)

Search

[List Search Results](#)

Users Manager

[Login Form](#)
[User Profile](#)
[Edit User Profile](#)

Figure 6: Category layouts

A list of all categories

This layout lists all the sub categories from one chosen category (*Figure 7*).

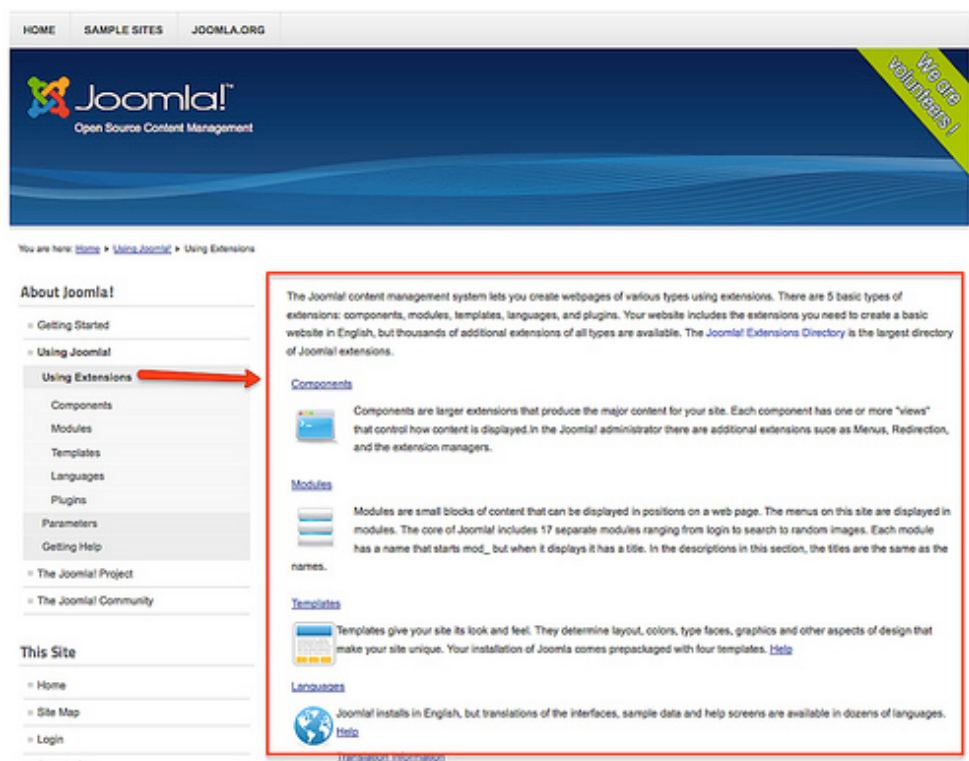


Figure 7: Layout All Categories

In this case the category description from the top level category *Extensions* is shown. One level of sub categories with their descriptions is also shown on the page, even empty categories. The articles in the top level category are hidden. Example: *Administration* → *Menus* → *About Joomla!* → *Using Extensions* → *Edit*.

A blog layout (like on the frontpage)

The blog layout lists all the articles from one chosen category (*Figure 8*).

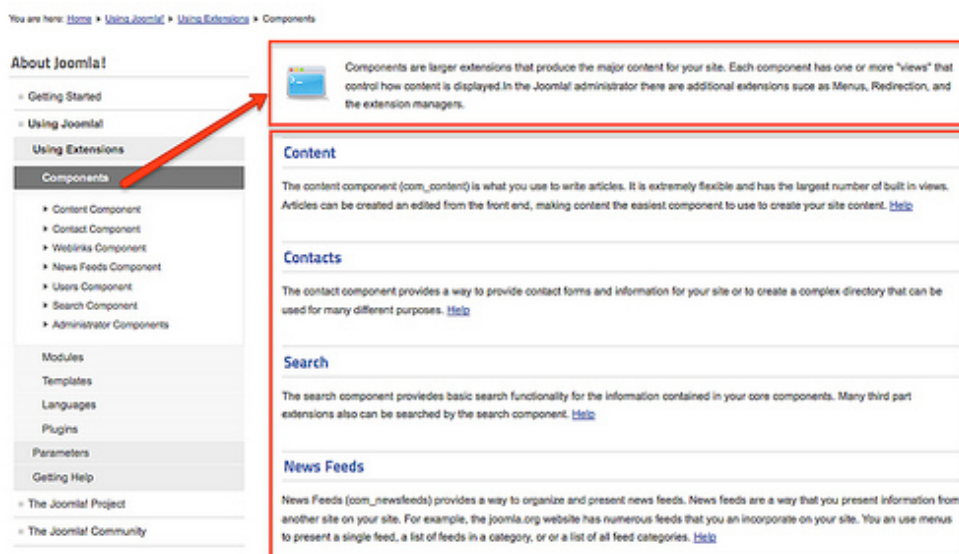


Figure 8: Layout Blog

In this case the category description from the category *Components* is shown. All the articles related to *Components* are shown with their teaser text in one column. More columns are also possible. The first seven articles in the top level category are hidden. Example: *Administration* → *Menus* → *Components* → *Edit* (*Figure 9*).

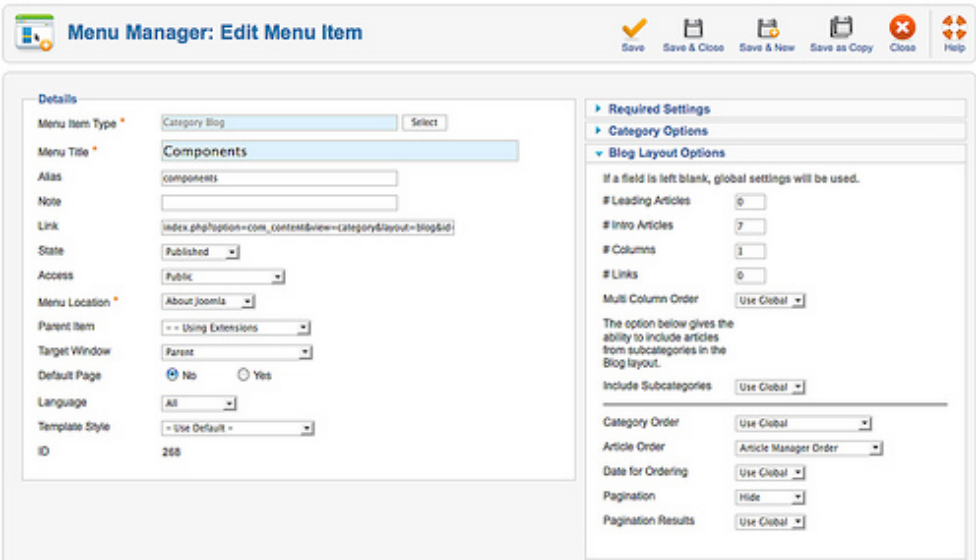


Figure 9: Layout

Blog settings

A category list

The category list layout lists all the articles from one chosen category in a table structure (Figure 10).

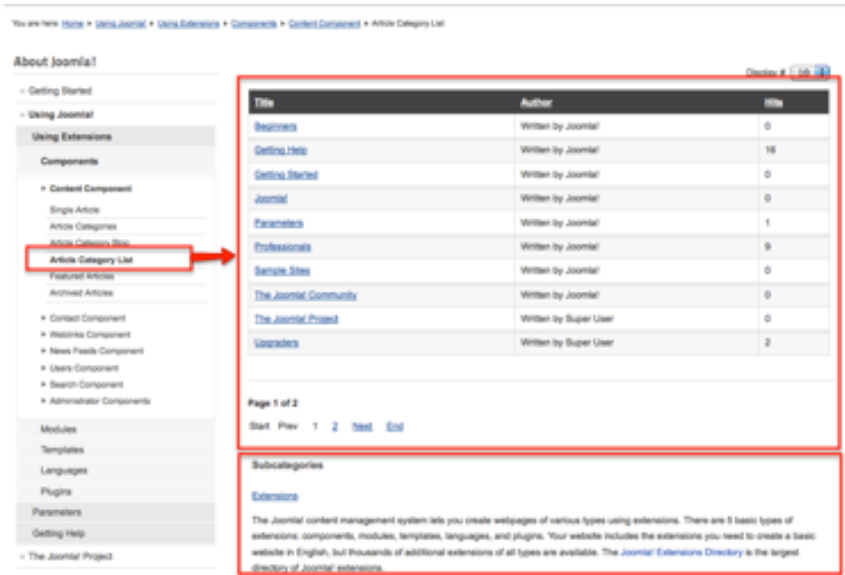


Figure 10: Layout Category List

In this case the category description from the category named *Joomla!* is shown. All the articles related to *Joomla!* are shown in a configurable table. You can choose to have parts of the table hidden and various sorting options are available. Example: *Administration* → *Menus* → *Components* → *Article Category list* → *Edit*.

Conclusion

The category system in Joomla! 1.6 is very powerful and easy to use. You can easily structure your entire website by using a set of nested categories in a very user-friendly way. One article can be assigned to one category.

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The logo consists of three overlapping triangles pointing to the right. The leftmost triangle is blue, the middle one is green, and the rightmost one is orange. They are layered such that the orange triangle is on top, followed by green, then blue.

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Chapter 8

Statuses, Trash and Check-Ins

In Joomla! your content can have several statuses. Depending on the type of content there can be a minimum of three statuses: **published**, **unpublished** and **trash**. What does that mean? After saving your fresh content for the first time, it exists in the Joomla! database and depending on its status, it will appear (or not) in different areas of your website.

The usual life cycle of content in Joomla! is:

1. unpublished until you are finished with editing and reviewing
2. *published* or *scheduled* (and possibly *featured* on the frontpage)
3. still *published* but may be removed from the frontpage
4. archived

Sometimes it is necessary to *unpublish* content and sometimes you may put it into the *trash*. The content itself will, of course, continue to exist. It has not been deleted. You can filter most of the tables in the administration interface by the desired statuses and assign different statuses to your content as often as you would like.

Unpublished

No website visitor is able to see the content. It is the phase in which you edit and review your content.

Published

It depends on the users' and visitors' permissions whether they will be able to view the content but generally the content on your website should be visible because it has been published!

Featured

The *featured* 'feature' is a switch you can use for your most important and latest content and is usually shown at the frontpage. It is an additional status because it is only relevant to articles. This is why it is possible for an article to be *unpublished* and *featured*.

Archived

There will come a time when you'll start thinking about an archive for your articles. Just set the status to *archived* and you've almost created an archive. Joomla! knows the creation date of your articles and offers an archive module to be shown on your site. The archive module is included in the example data. If it is not available, just create one in *Modules* → *New* → *Archived Articles*. Your articles will then be shown like in *Figure 1*. Read more in chapter [Modules](#).

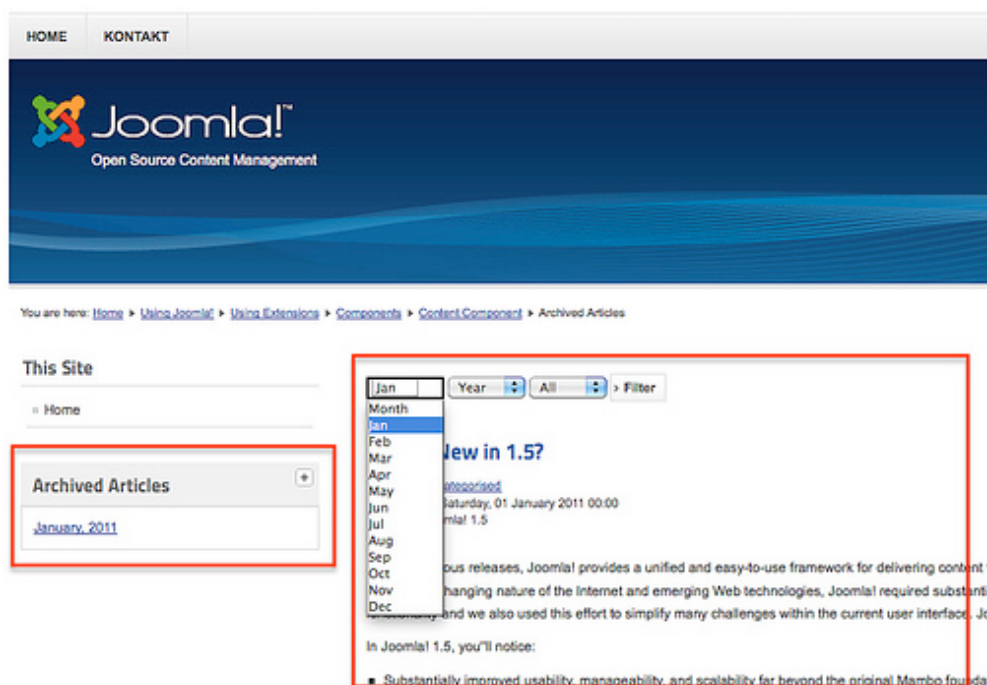


Figure 1: Joomla! Archive

Trash

The second last status is *trash*. If a content item ends up here it still exists and can be retrieved. You can place modules, menu items, categories, articles, contacts, and even more content in your trash. You can see the contents of your trash can by filtering it (Figure 2).

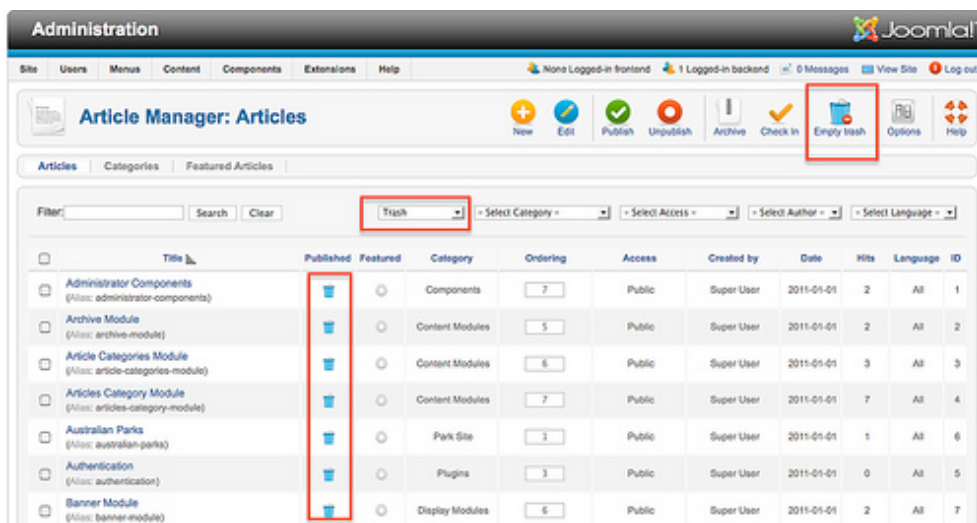


Figure 2: Trash

In the filtered view the *Trash* icon changes to *Empty trash*. This is your opportunity to delete content.

Check In

The *Check In* icon in Joomla! may not be the kind you know from Foursquare³¹ or other location-based services. It is a security feature for editing your content. As soon as a user starts editing content, Joomla! locks this content for all other users. The advantage of this behavior is that changes by another user cannot be overwritten. That's a very convenient feature. One big problem, however, appears when the user editing the content accidentally closes the browser window, allows the session to expire or the power plant shuts off the power or ... you get my point :-).

Then the content is locked and no one else can edit it!

No one else (except a user with proper permission, e.g. you as the administrator) can *check in* the content again to allow others to edit it. Unfortunately, you will only notice unchecked content by a small lock being displayed near the title (*Figure 2*) or by a cry for help from one of your users :-).

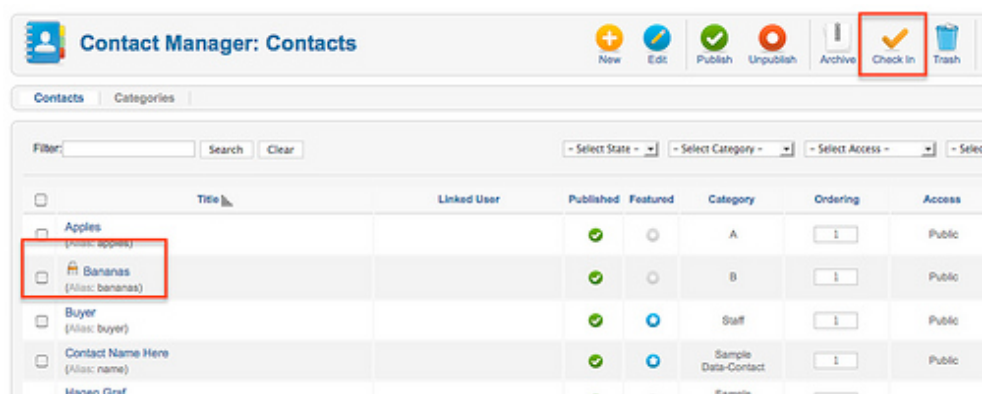


Figure 3: Check In

³¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foursquare_%28social_network%29

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Tired of creating the same type of events over and over again?
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With redFORM you are able to charge money for the events you are offering. Paypal, ideal and epay are supported right now, with more to come.



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redEVENT supports unlimited attendees, venues, categories and user groups.



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redEVENT gives you a variety of different view options, from category views to attendees lists.



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redEVENT is already used on various websites with over 100 different events and over 1000 different attendees every year.



Chapter 9

Website and Content Configuration

Joomla! has different levels of configuring options. These options are transmitted from the highest to the lowest level.

- Global configuration
- Options for articles, components, modules, plug-ins, languages and templates

GLOBAL CONFIGURATION

In the *Global Configuration* section you can define all the settings that are valid for the entire website. Most values of the variables are saved in the *configuration.php* file. Vital information like user name, database name and password for the database server, for instance, and 'lesser' parameters such as the pre-determined length of displayed lists are stored in this file. The work area is divided into four tabs:

- Site Settings
- System Settings
- Server Settings
- Permissions

The work area of every tab consists of dozens of fields, check boxes, switches and text areas. The easiest way to get a glimpse is to move your mouse across the labels to read the help text, which appears in a small yellow tooltip (*Figure 1*).

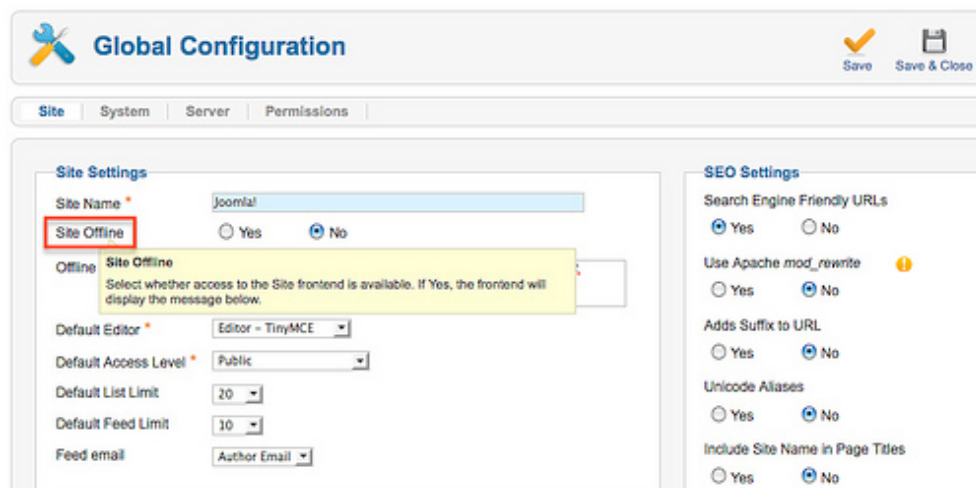


Figure 1: Tooltips

Most of the options are self-explanatory. I'll mention a few settings that are new in Joomla! 1.6 with greater detail.

Site Settings

The *Site settings* have a new field for setting the default access level for new users. Configurable access levels are a new feature (*Read more: [Users and Permissions](#)*).

The *Metadata settings* now contain the option to add *Content Right* data. Joomla! will add your data to the meta declaration *rights* in your HTML code. Depending on your search engine optimization (SEO) 'religion', it is good or bad to have this declaration in your meta profile. Now Joomla! serves both :-)

```
<meta name="rights" content="© 2011 cocoate.com EURL, France" />
```

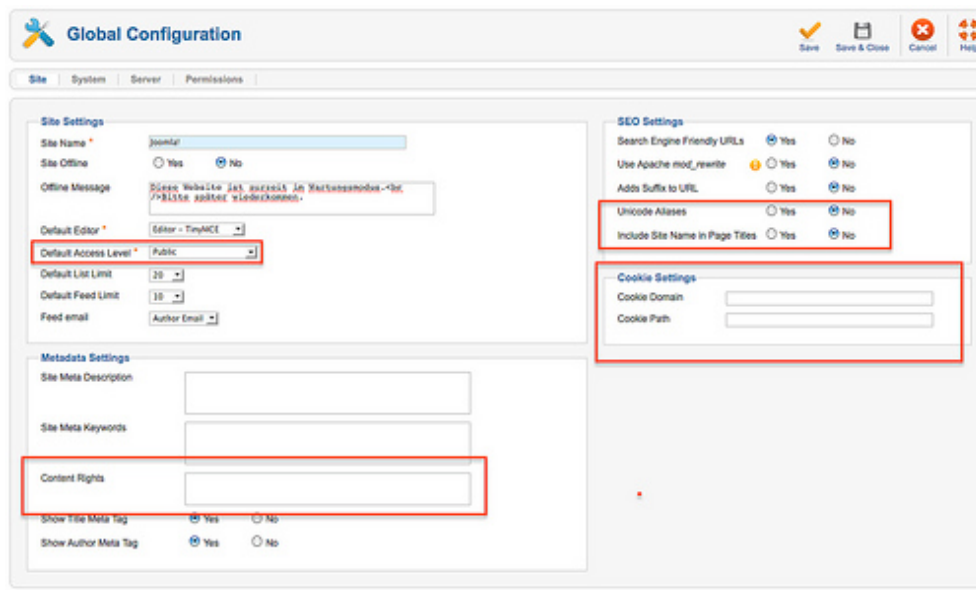


Figure 2: Site settings

In *SEO settings*, the new options are

- *Unicode Aliases*

You set aliases for article titles. With this feature, URLs like `http://example.com/所有一起` are possible.

- *Include Site Name in Page Titles*

With this feature the article title will appear in the browser's document title bar.

Cookie settings are a wonderful feature for evaluating a cookie on different sub domains. You will need this feature if you have a site (*example.com*) and one or more sub domains (*blog.example.com*) and you want to offer your users the service to login on *example.com* and post on *blog.example.com*. Without this feature, the user should login again to post something on *blog.example.com*.

System Settings

The user and media settings are no longer in this area. You will now find them in the *User* and *Media Manager*.

The cache settings are different because the underlying cache system was rewritten and now provides more possibilities. In general, a cache makes your sites faster by storing parts of the HTML in files. The web server can deliver these files extremely fast. It is possible to cache pages, component views and modules. You can purge and clear the cache in *Site* → *Maintenance*.

Server Settings

All the server settings are the same as in Joomla! 1.5. Nevertheless, I'll mention the option *Force SSL*. This option is getting more and more attention. You can offer your users a completely secured traffic. It is necessary to have SSL configured in your web server and you need a SSL certificate.

The screenshot displays the Joomla! 1.7 administration interface for Server Settings. The 'Force SSL' dropdown menu is highlighted with a red rectangle, showing three options: 'None', 'Administrator Only', and 'Force SSL' (which is selected). Other visible settings include: Path to Temp Folder (set to /Users/hagengraf/Documents/htdocs/DE/joomla16/tmp), Gzip Page Compression (set to No), Error Reporting (set to System Default), Location Settings (set to Entire Site), Server Time Zone (set to Universal Time, Coordinated (UTC)), FTP Settings (Enable FTP set to No, FTP Host set to 127.0.0.1, FTP Port set to 21), Database Settings (Database Type set to MySQL, Host set to localhost, Database Username set to root, Database Name set to joomla16, Database Prefix set to jos_), and Mail Settings (Mailer set to PHP Mail, From email set to hagengraf@gmail.com, From Name set to Joomla!, Sendmail Path set to /usr/sbin/sendmail, SMTP Authentication set to No, SMTP Security set to None, SMTP Port set to 25, SMTP Username and Password fields are empty, and SMTP Host set to localhost).

Figure 3: Server settings - SSL

Permissions

Here is the place to set your global permissions for your user groups. Fortunately, it is not always necessary to change the default settings. If you change the setting for a group, it will apply to this and all sub groups, components and content. Basically you allow, deny and inherit the permissions *Site Login*, *Admin Login*, *Super Admin*, *Access Component*, *Create*, *Delete*, *Edit*, *Edit State* and *Edit Own*. Every group has their own set of permissions (*Figure 4*).

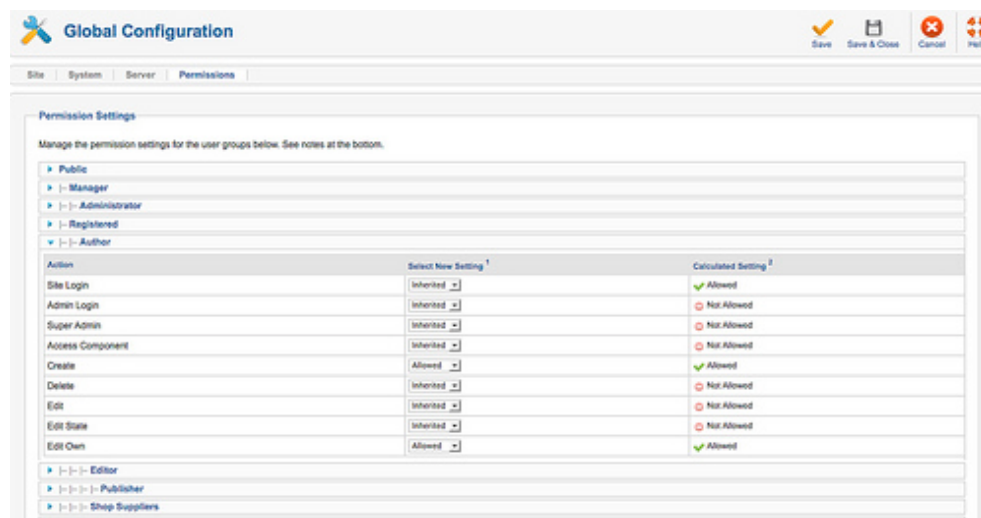


Figure 4: Global group permissions

Options for content, components, modules, plug-ins, languages, templates

In every manager, you'll find an *Options* icon where you can launch a configuration form. In some cases the options window has an additional permissions tab, e.g. the *Category* and the *Article Manager*. In this permissions tab, you can use your global permissions for the whole website or you can change them depending on your needs for all categories and articles.

In both cases you'll also find a *Text Filter* tab (*Figure 5*). The text filter is a concept, which allows you to search contributed text for patterns like HTML tags and filter them. It's possible to set different filters for different groups. Let's say a registered user is allowed to post text with HTML tags inside but without an iframe. Only your individual group 'iframers' has the right to post iframes!

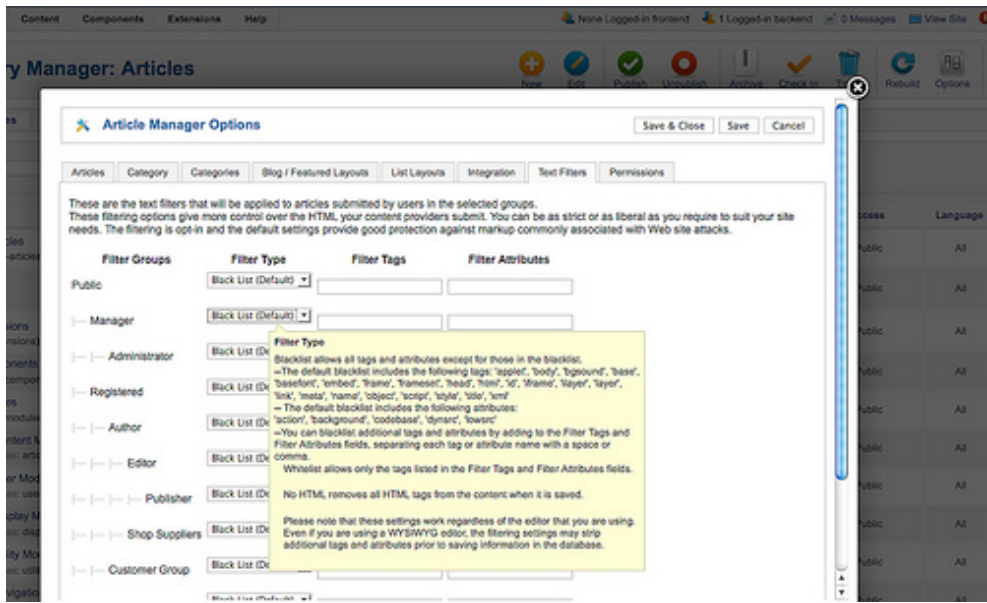
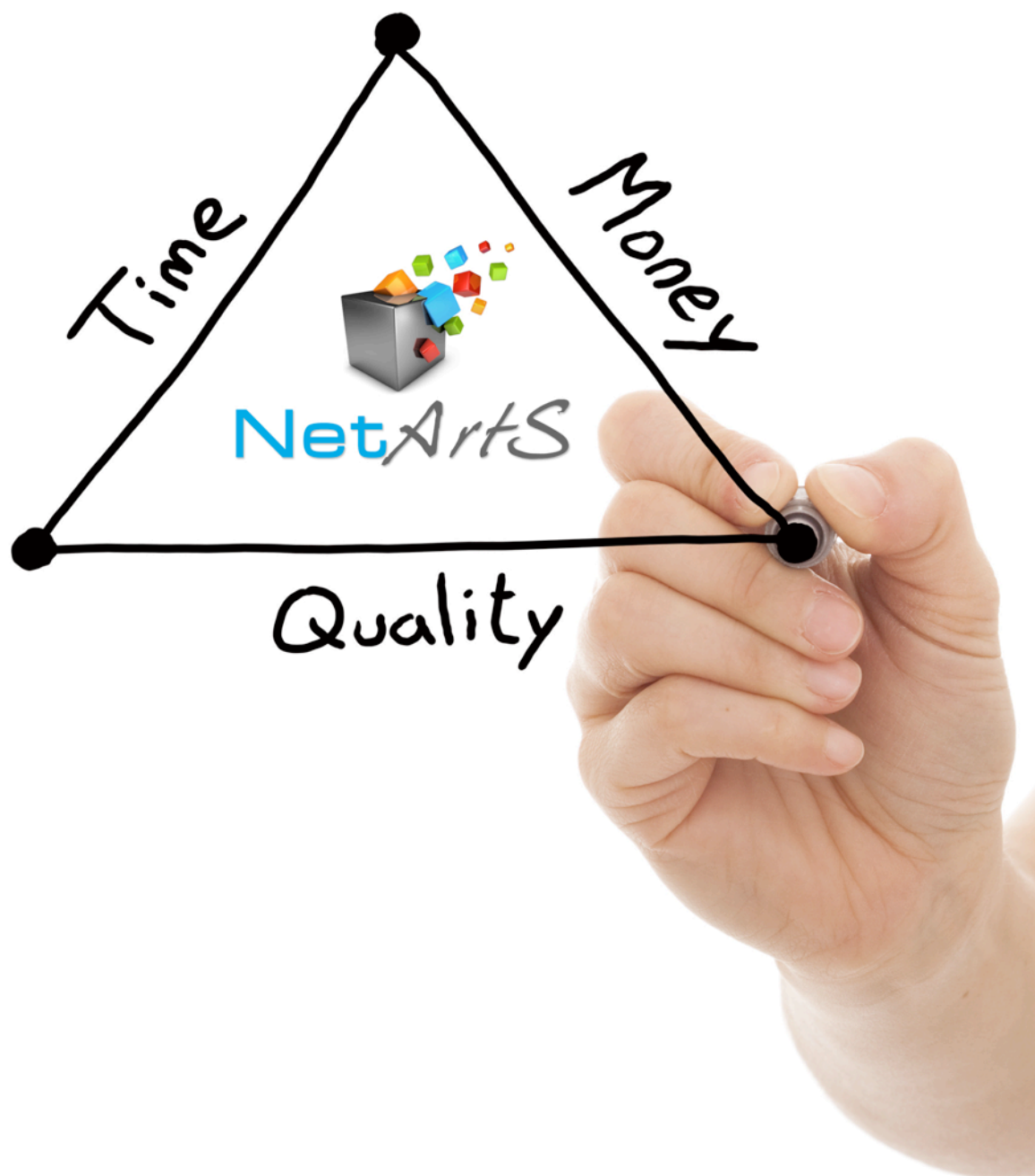


Figure 5: Article options - Text Filter

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Chapter 10

Templates

The template is one of the most important pieces of a website. It provides the appearance, the design. It motivates new visitors to stay on your site and explore. Regular visitors and users appreciate being on a site with a beautiful and useful design. Think of other products, for instance. A car needs a good engine and tires but one of the most important reasons for buying one is often the design. Even if the design is not the main reason, it is often a trigger to contemplate the idea of purchasing and may cause a buyer to consider more tangible reasons. If the design is well-made, people expect the rest to be well-made, too. (*Figure 1, Figure 2*)!



Figure 1: Car with stickers (Richardmasoner CC BY-SA 2.0³²)



Figure 2: Red car (FotoSleuth CC BY-SA 2.0³³)

³² <http://www.flickr.com/photos/bike/201402884>

³³ <http://www.flickr.com/photos/51811543@N08/4978639642>

Both of these cars are made for different target groups. They are an example of different approaches in design.

Web design is somewhat like a handcraft. Possessing skills in techniques like HTML, CSS, JavaScript, PHP, image editing and many others is imperative. Joomla! is only one more tool in your toolbox.

A good template is not only about colors and graphics. The shape and positioning of the content is just as important. The website has to be user-friendly and reliable. Exactly this challenge reminds me of the two cars again.

Web design is still a young profession. A web designer often has to deal with low bandwidth, incompatible browsers, inexperienced content editors and other people involved in the process of creating a 'good' website. The creation of a Joomla! website is often a process, in which everyone involved learns a lot. Good web design is hard work. :-)

JOOMLA! AND TEMPLATES

Joomla! is known for its quality and simplicity. In Joomla! a single page is generated by the HTML output of one *component*, several *modules* and the template. Each page is accessible via a unique URL. Take the front page as an example. The content component produces the HTML output for the articles in the middle (Figure 3). The blocks next to the articles are different *modules*. You can combine the HTML output from **one** *component* with the HTML output of **any number of** *modules*. Existing *modules* can also be reused on other pages.

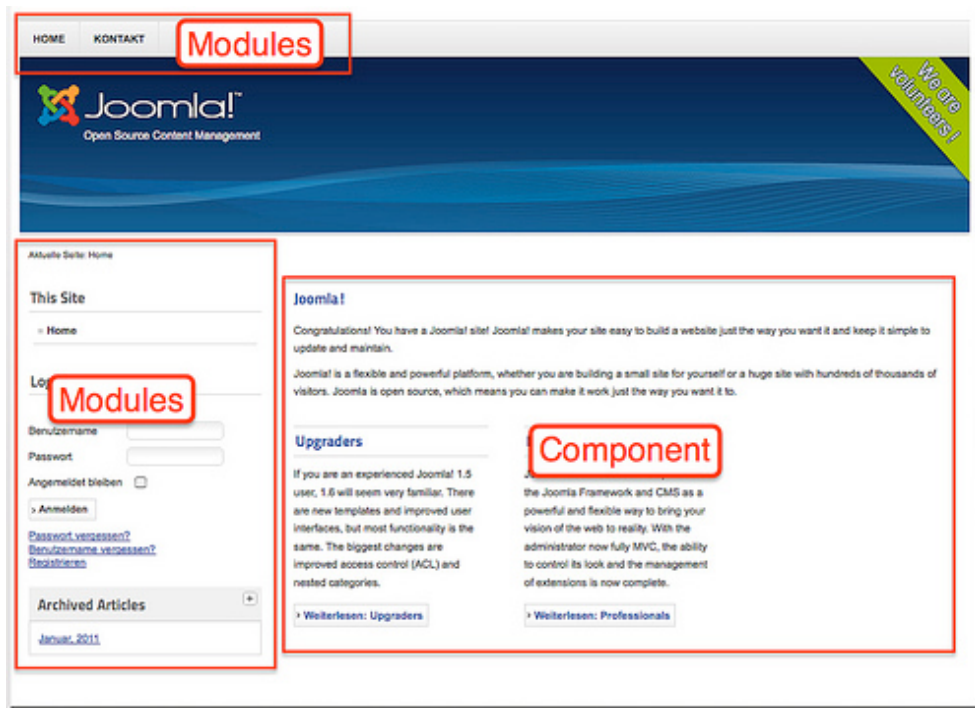


Figure 3: Joomla! front page

POSITIONS

You must know, of course, at which point you can assign modules at all. For this purpose, each template provides so-called *positions*. In order to see these *positions* you have to enable the *Preview Module Positions* switch (*Extension - Template Manager - Options*). After that, you can access your website by using the parameter *tp=1* (<http://localhost/index.php?tp=1>). You'll see the emphasized module positions and their names (*Figure 4*). In *Extensions - Module Manager* you can assign one of these positions to a module. If you need the module at different positions, you may also copy it.

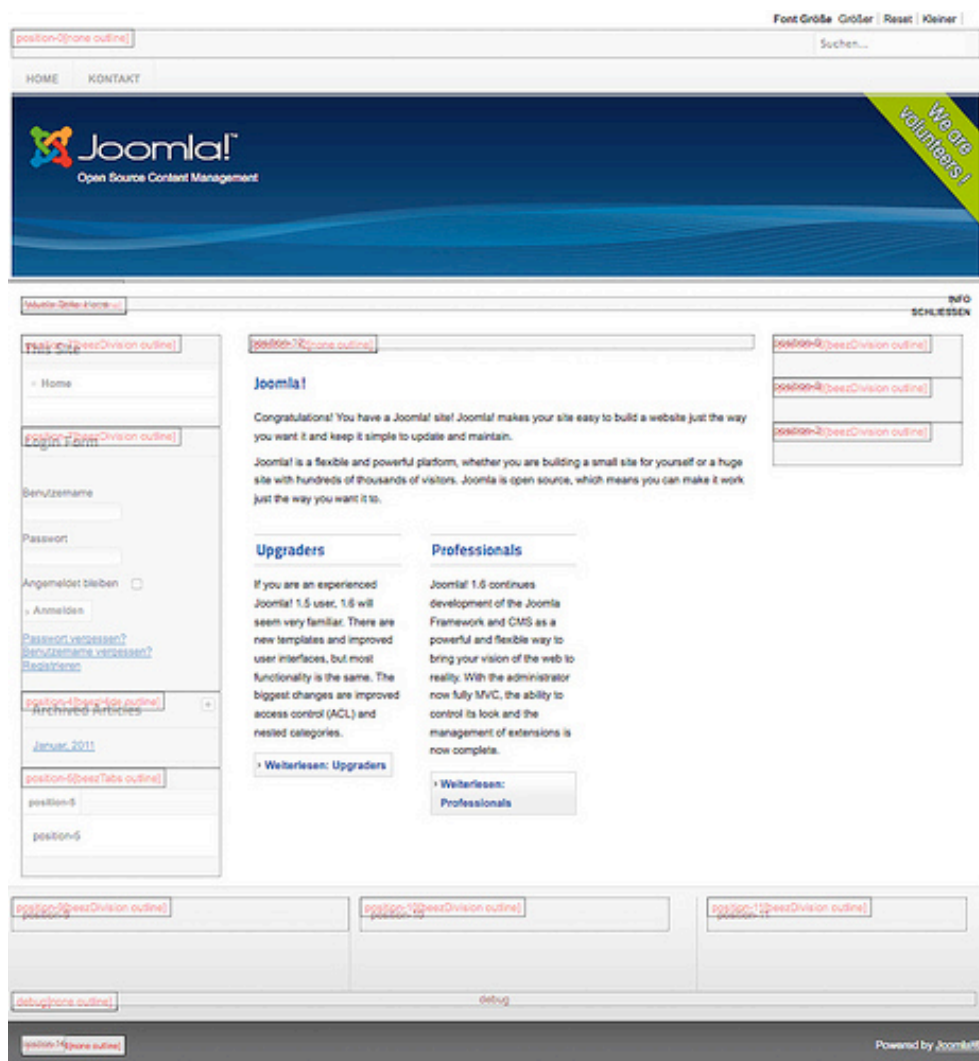


Figure 4: Module positions

CORE TEMPLATES

Joomla! core comes with three site templates and two administrator templates. You can see a preview in *Extensions → Template Manager → Tab Templates* (*Figure 5*).

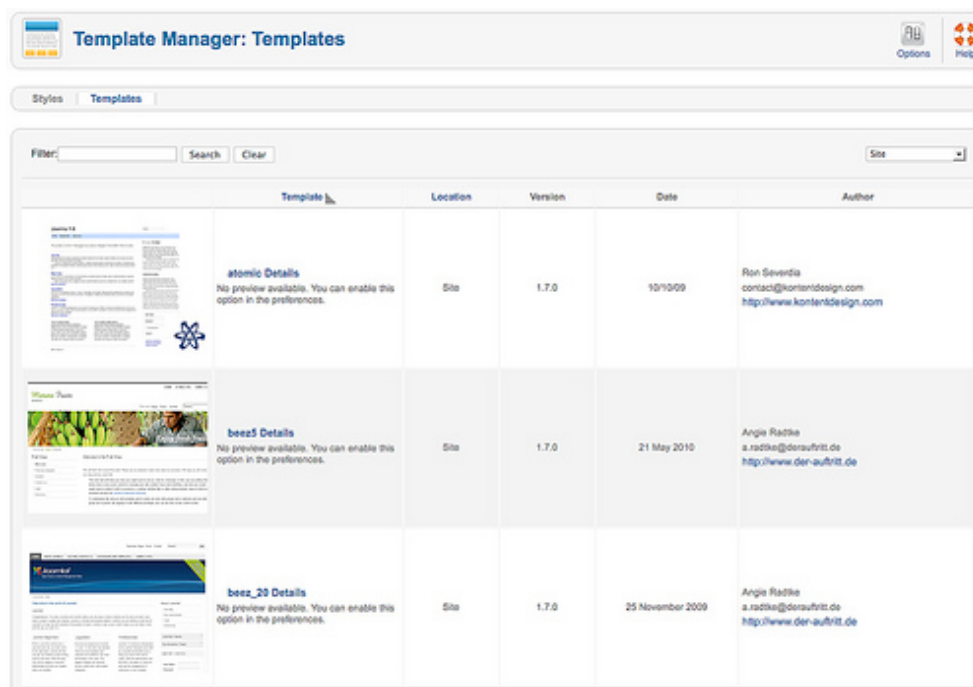


Figure 5: Site templates

The Atomic template is an example of what a basic template looks like. In the chapter [Create a New Template Using Atomic](#), we will use this template as a base to create our own template. The *Beez5* template is the HTML 5 Version of *Beez2*. Also for the Administration, another template is available. (Figure 6)

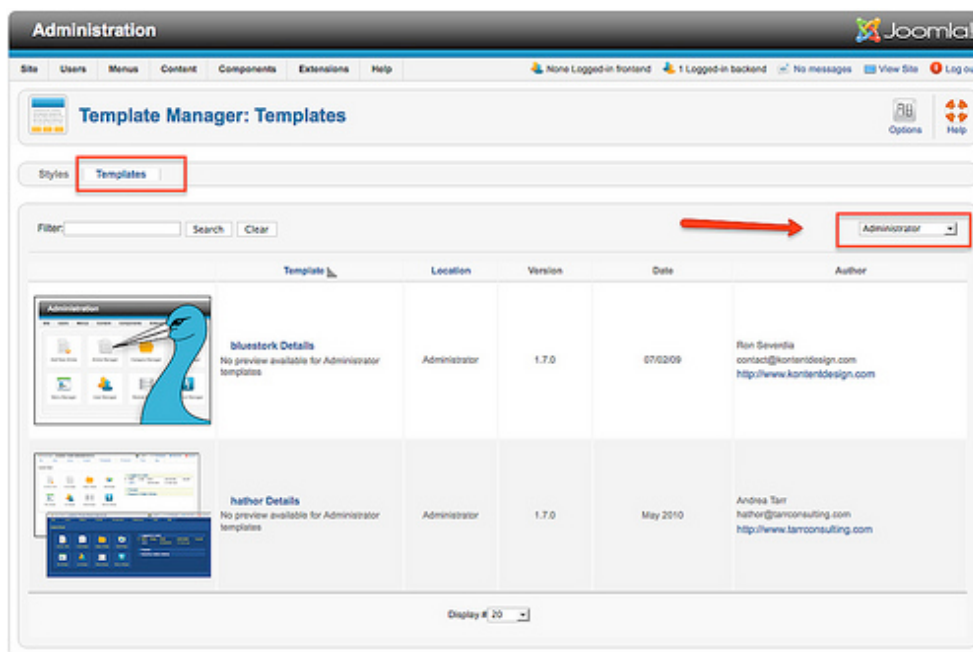


Figure 6: Admin templates

STYLES

Styles are a new feature in Joomla! 1.6. They offer the possibility to create and use different versions of one template. A template has a minimum of one style. In this style, configurations can be made depending on the template, such as changing the colors or uploading the header logo. You may set the default style for your site in *Extensions* → *Template Manager* → *Styles*. You can filter between *Site* and *Administrator Styles* by choosing the location filter. The default template Beez2 comes with two predefined styles: *default* and *Parks Site*.

You can create additional styles by copying them. Each style can be assigned to a menu item. If you would like a green background on your site when people click on *menu item A*, for example, and a blue background when they click on *menu item B*, you can assign the corresponding styles (*Figure 7*).

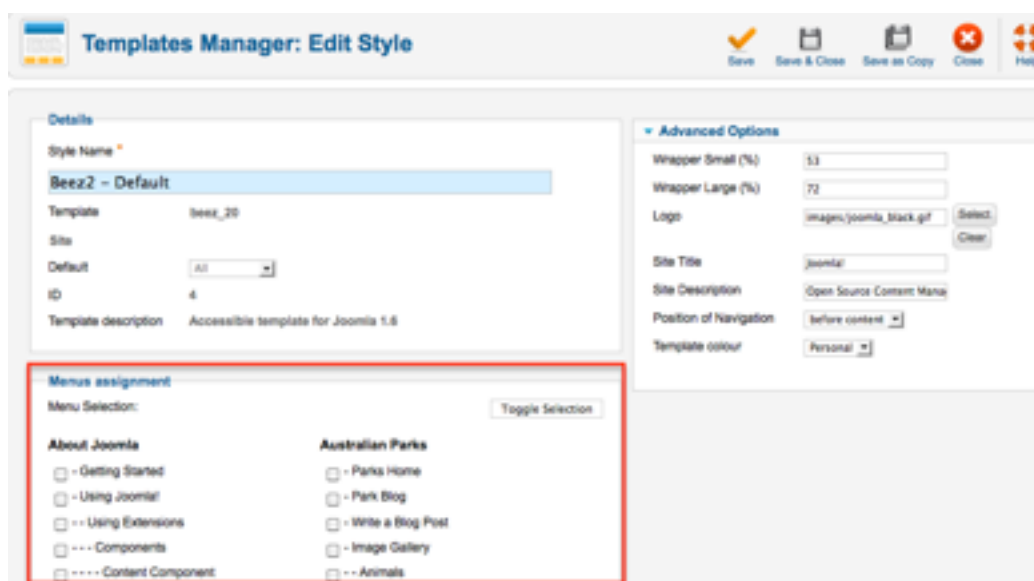


Figure 7: Assign a style to a menu item

You will find more on templates in the chapter [Working with Templates](#).

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Chapter 11

Navigation

Every site needs an easy to understand navigation, otherwise it will not be possible for a user to find what he is looking for. This may sound simple but is not easily done. In a perfect world it should be possible to access any page on a website with two or three clicks. Another fact is, that often, if not always, your visitors will come from a search engine or social media site and will land anywhere on your site but your frontpage. This is a reason to think about a "Home" button on every page!

A website often has a primary and a secondary navigation. The primary navigation is usually at the top or on the left or right side. Secondary navigation is at the bottom or at the top, but mostly a bit smaller than the primary navigation. It contains links like contact, about us and legal notices. The idea behind this is to have these links at the site but not at a very important position.

As a general rule, do not put more than four to eight links in a navigation level.

BREADCRUMBS

A 'breadcrumb trail' is a navigation aid. The term comes from the trail of breadcrumbs left by Hansel and Gretel³⁴ in the Brothers Grimm fairytale. Usually breadcrumbs are positioned horizontally on the top of a web page. Two structures are used:

- showing links back to each previous page the user clicked through to get to the current page
- showing the parent pages of the current one

Breadcrumbs are a way to prevent visitors from feeling lost on your site. Ideally visitors should always know where they are on the site and how to go back. Joomla! provides a breadcrumb module for this task and most templates have a breadcrumb position reserved for it (*Figure 1*).

³⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hansel_and_Gretel

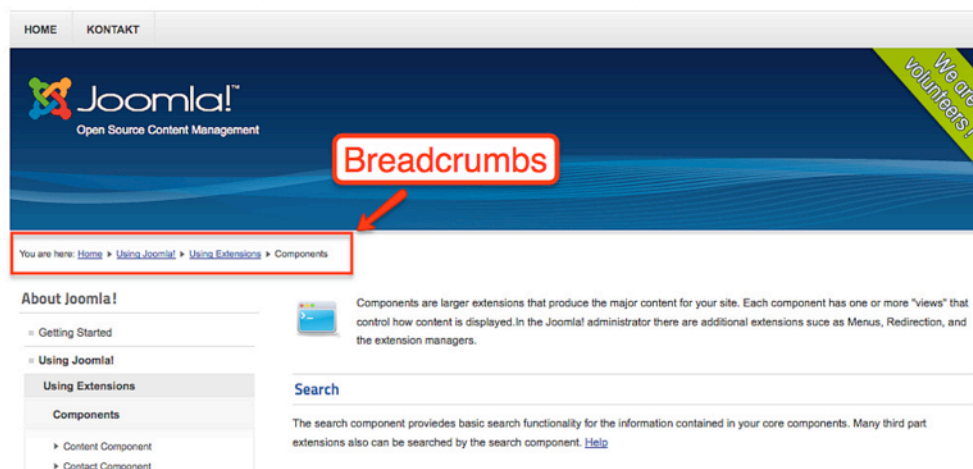


Figure 1: Breadcrumbs

JOOMLA! MENUS

Joomla navigations are created by so-called menus. You can create as many menus as you need for your website. Each menu may contain any number of nested menu items and you can even filter the level. A menu item is assigned to a component or an external URL. Modules and template styles can be assigned to menu items. In the example data, a few menus are shown that have already been created.

Let's have a look at two examples of primary navigation with static pages and dynamic categories.

FIRST EXAMPLE: A STATIC CATALOG OR BOOK STRUCTURE

Sometimes you need a navigation for a book, a catalog or a guide. You'll find this configuration in the example data in the *About Joomla!* menu. Let's say we're writing a short book consisting of three chapters. The navigation should be linked to all pages and look like figure 2.

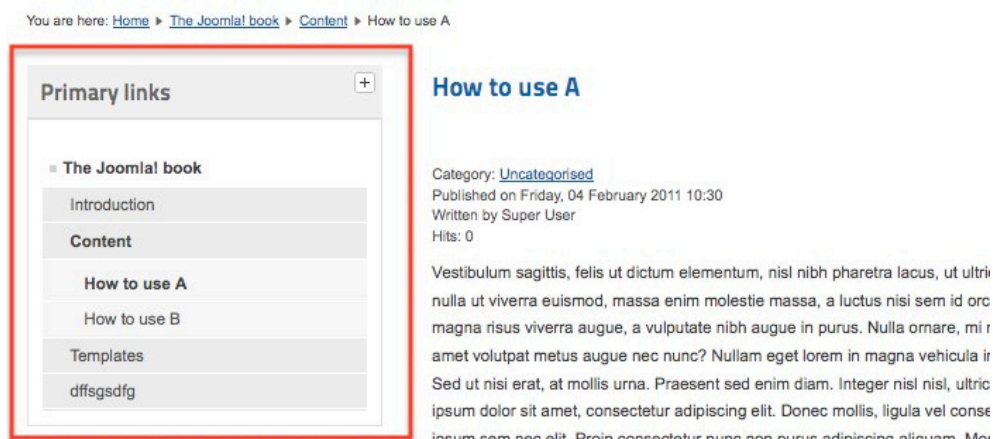


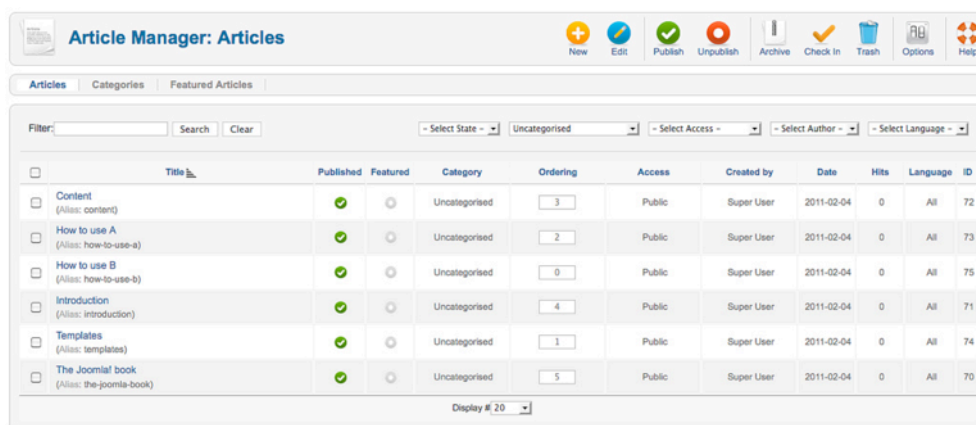
Figure 2: Static book structure

Preparation

Create a book structure with a few chapters.

- The Joomla book
 - Introduction
 - Content
 - How to use A
 - How to use B
 - Templates

Before creating menu items, you have to create individual articles (pages) first. Go to *Content* → *Article Manager* → *Add new article* (Figure 3). You may assign the *uncategorized* category to these articles or you can create a *book* category in advance and assign it to the chapters.



The screenshot shows the Joomla! Article Manager interface. At the top, there's a toolbar with icons for New, Edit, Publish, Unpublish, Archive, Check In, Trash, Options, and Help. Below the toolbar, there are tabs for Articles, Categories, and Featured Articles. A filter bar includes a search input, a clear button, and dropdown menus for State, Category (set to 'Uncategorised'), Access, Author, and Language. The main area is a table listing six articles:

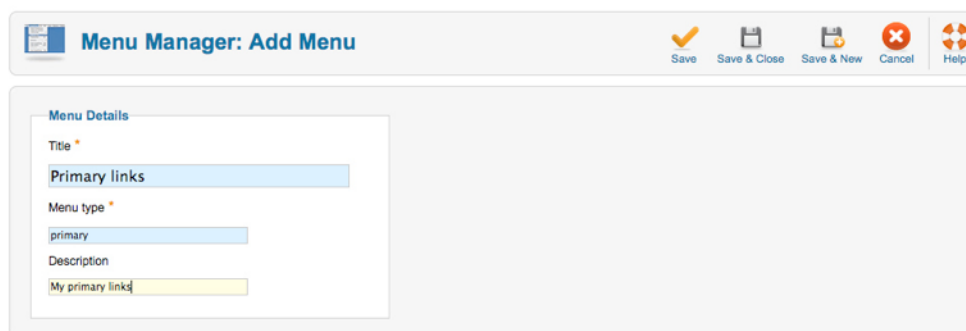
<input type="checkbox"/>	Title	Published	Featured	Category	Ordering	Access	Created by	Date	Hits	Language	ID
<input type="checkbox"/>	Content (Alias: content)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Uncategorised	3	Public	Super User	2011-02-04	0	All	72
<input type="checkbox"/>	How to use A (Alias: how-to-use-a)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Uncategorised	2	Public	Super User	2011-02-04	0	All	73
<input type="checkbox"/>	How to use B (Alias: how-to-use-b)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Uncategorised	0	Public	Super User	2011-02-04	0	All	75
<input type="checkbox"/>	Introduction (Alias: introduction)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Uncategorised	4	Public	Super User	2011-02-04	0	All	71
<input type="checkbox"/>	Templates (Alias: templates)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Uncategorised	1	Public	Super User	2011-02-04	0	All	74
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Joomla! book (Alias: the-joomla-book)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Uncategorised	5	Public	Super User	2011-02-04	0	All	70

At the bottom of the table, there is a 'Display # 20' dropdown menu.

Figure 3: Six 'book chapters'

Step 1: Creating the menu

You can use an already existing menu as your *primary links* or you can create a new one by accessing *Menus* → *Menu Manager* → *Add new Menu* and filling out the form (Figure 4).



The screenshot shows the Joomla! Menu Manager 'Add Menu' form. At the top, there's a toolbar with icons for Save, Save & Close, Save & New, Cancel, and Help. The form is titled 'Menu Details' and contains the following fields:

- Title ***: A text input field with 'Primary links' entered.
- Menu type ***: A dropdown menu with 'primary' selected.
- Description**: A text input field with 'My primary link' entered.

Figure 4: Add new menu

Step 2: Creating the menu items

Go to *Menus* → *Primary links* and add the six articles as links. Choose *Single Article* as *Menu Item Type*. Select the article and enter a *Menu Title* (Figure 5). If you have forgotten how to do that, have a look at the chapter [How to create an 'About Us' Page](#).

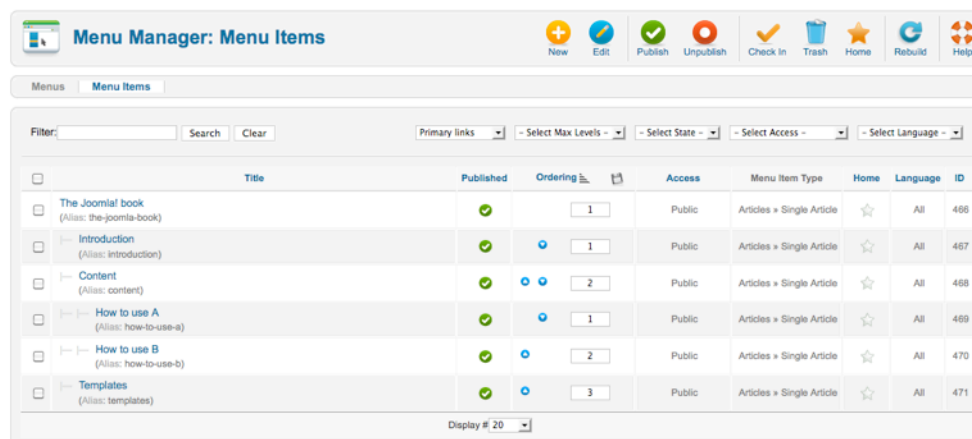


Figure 5: Primary menu items

Step 3: Creating and assigning the module

This step is a bit tricky. You now have the articles, the menu and the menu items but you'll also need a module to position on your site. Let's go ahead and create one. Go to *Extensions* → *Modules* → *New Module* and fill in the form. In the *Field Select Menu* in *Basic Settings*, choose *Primary links*. Select *Yes* in the field *Show Sub menu items* (Figure 6).

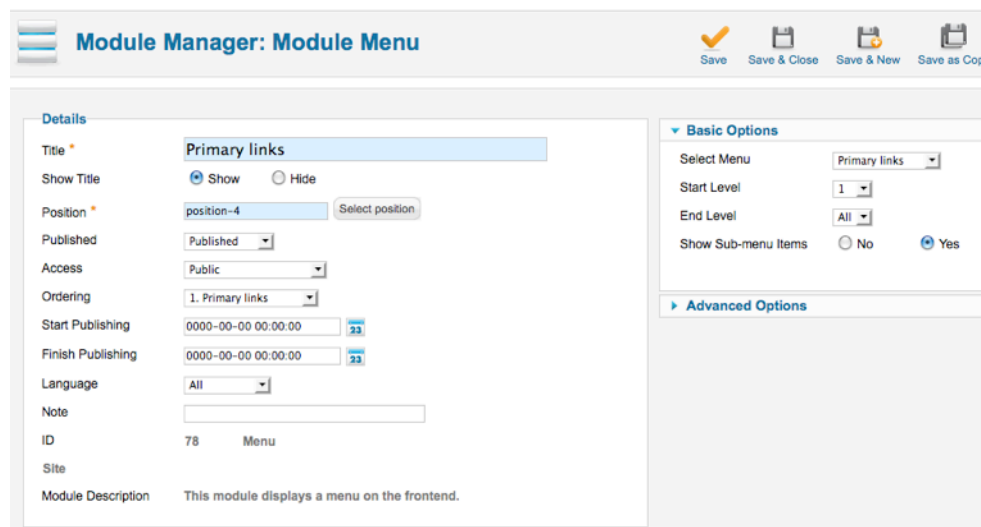


Figure 6: Primary links module

The last step is the template position. Click the *Select position* button, filter for template *Beez_20* and choose *position-4*. Save everything and you're done.

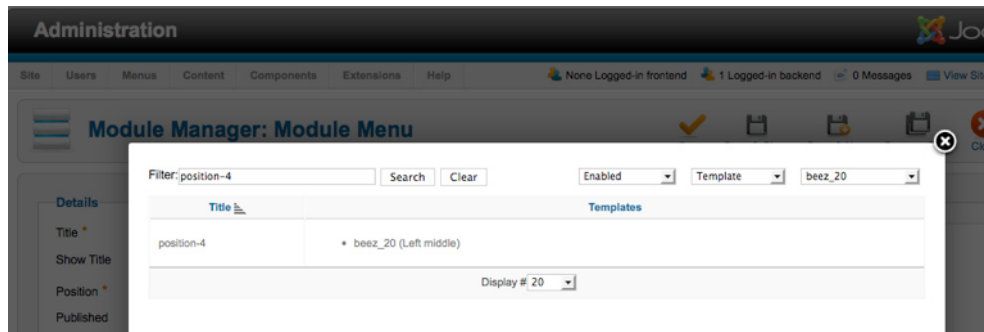


Figure 7: Select template position

SECOND EXAMPLE: LINKING TO CATEGORIES (NEWS MAGAZINE)

It is possible to link to a few pages like in the first example but what will you do if you have thousands of articles? The answer is easy in Joomla! 1.7:

Build a structure with categories, assign the articles and link it to a category layout.

Preparations

We'll need a few categories with articles:

Categories:

- News
 - World
 - Africa
 - Europe
- Technology
 - Internet
 - Cars

Create them or use existing categories (Read more: [Structure Your Content with Categories](#)).

Step 1: The menu

It's up to you how to continue. The easiest way is to use the existing *Primary Links* menu. But if you want, you can create a *News* Menu, like me.

Step 2: The menu items

When dealing with categories you have to think about what should be shown after you have clicked on the link. The expected behavior in our case is

- Category News = all news should come up
- Category News → World = we want world news only

and so on (Figure 8).

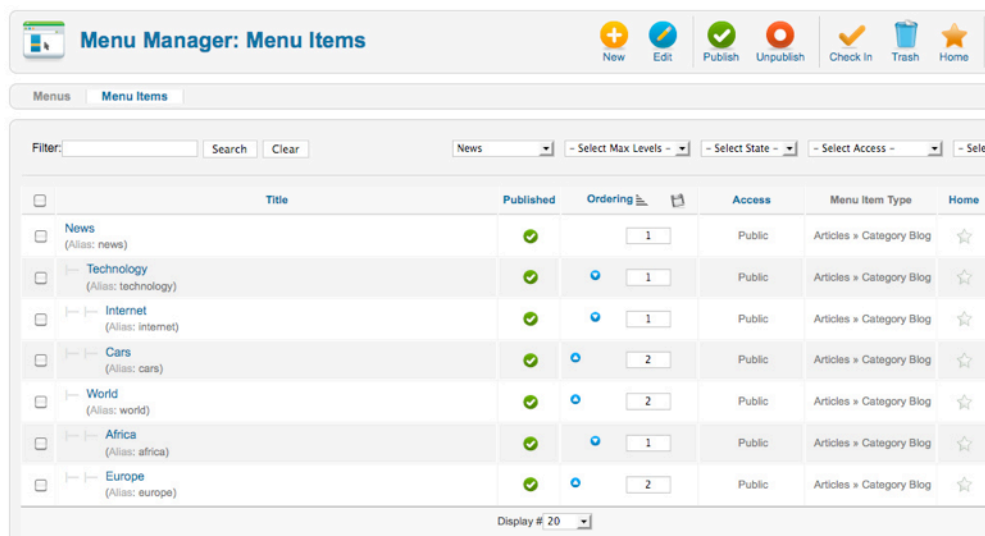


Figure 8: Menu items in News menu

To achieve the expected behavior, create a menu item with the type *Category Blog*. In *Required settings*, choose your newly created category *News*. In *Blog Layout Options*, choose *Include Sub Categories - All* and *# Leading Articles = 0*. Continue with creating nested menu items for each additional category and you're done (Figure 9).

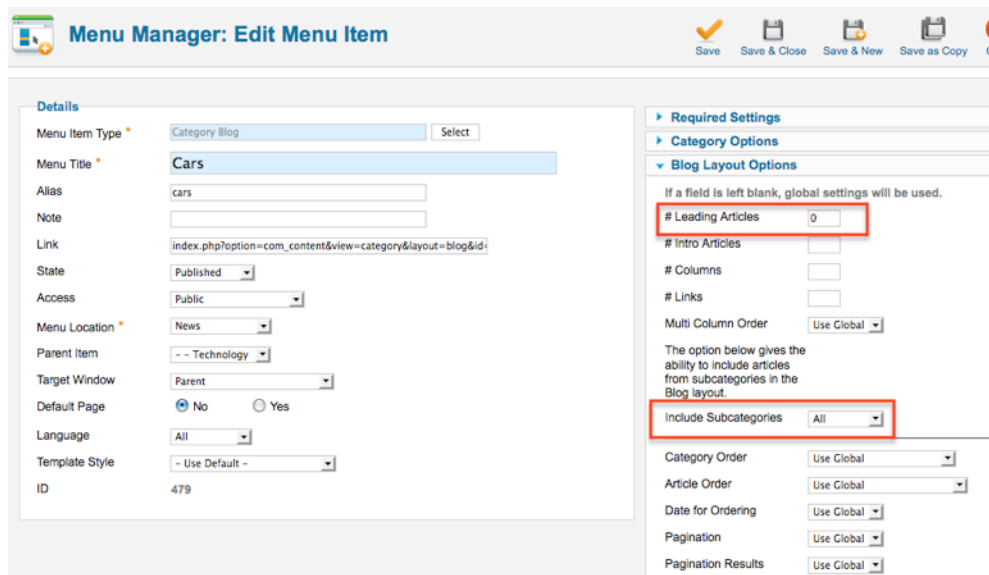


Figure 9: Category Options

Now you can handle thousands of articles. Your navigation is prepared for that and your visitors will understand the system immediately (Figure 10).

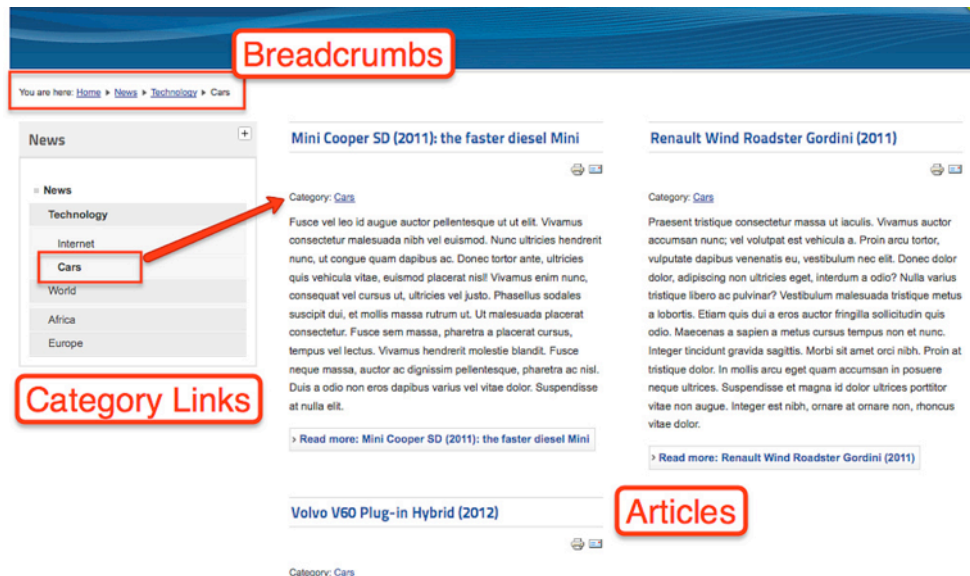


Figure 10: Articles in category structure

Some tweaking

As you have seen, there are nearly infinite possibilities of setting options. Many things are possible and there is usually a way to achieve your goals. Concerning the navigation design, it is possible to filter the level of the menu items in the module. It is possible, for example, to put

- the first level of our *News* menu at the top position and the second and third level in the the left or right sidebar
- the whole menu on top and use drop down menus (depending on the capabilities of the template)

If you play around a bit, you will find a solution for nearly every case. The Joomla! navigation system may be a bit complex on one hand but is very powerful on the other.

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Chapter 12

Users and Permissions

People simply try to use the Joomla! website that you have created for them - in an active or passive way. The better the experience, the better the website will be perceived. Joomla! - as every CMS differentiates between visitors and registered users with different permissions. Visitors usually arrive via search engines or social media site recommendations and can become users by registering. Already registered users mostly know what they are looking for and come to your site with certain expectations.

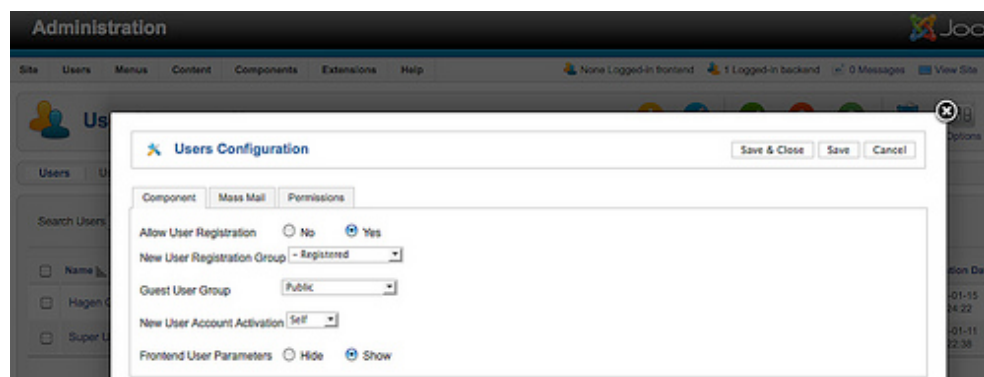
The more users your site has, the more complex the topic users and permissions becomes. In versions preceding Joomla! 1.6, there was a static system consisting of user groups, permissions and access levels that could not be changed. With Joomla! 1.7, the old system is still alive as the default configuration of a very powerful so-called access control list (ACL)³⁵.

Every site access will be evaluated by a *Permission Group*, even an access from a visitor. After registering on your Joomla! website, the user will automatically become a member of a *Permission Group*. The group has predefined permissions and belongs to an *access level*. One *Access Level* can have any number of *Permission Groups*. One group can have any number of users/visitors. Permissions can be passed down and overwritten in several places.

Let's begin by having a look at the registration process.

REGISTRATION AND LOGIN

The first registration process in your website's life cycle was completed with the installation of Joomla!. In the last step you were prompted for a user name, an email address and a password. The person who installed Joomla! is now the super duper administrator, who has permission to do everything on the site. This is why every Joomla! website has at least one user account. It's up to this user only to modify the behavior of the site in *Users - User Manager - Options* (Figure 1).



³⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Access_control_list

Figure 1: User options

On your Joomla! site, you can create as many users as you would like. You can also allow visitors to register themselves. Depending on their permissions, users can create their own content and/or view content that has been created for them in particular.

User options

The form has three tabs

- **Component**

In this area you are able to configure whether a registration is possible or not. One of the new features since Joomla! 1.6 is the possibility to configure in which user group the guests are in and in which user group the registered users are in by default.

- **Mass mail**

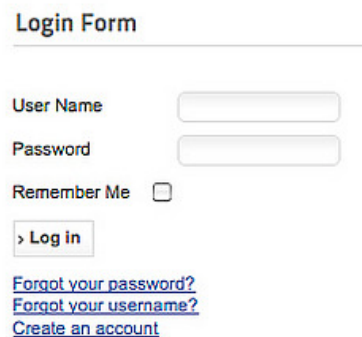
It is possible to send a mass mail to your users. In this tab you can configure the static email settings.

- **Permissions**

In this tab you can manage the permission settings for every user group.

Log in

Visitors can register on the website. Joomla!, therefore, offers a login module, which can be positioned at the site (*Figure 2*).



The image shows a Joomla! Login Form module. It has a title "Login Form" with a horizontal line underneath. Below the title are two input fields: "User Name" and "Password". Below these fields is a "Remember Me" checkbox. Below the checkbox is a "Log in" button with a right-pointing arrow. Below the button are three links: "Forgot your password?", "Forgot your username?", and "Create an account".

Figure 2: Login module

This module can be configured with many additional features like customized text, SSL encryption and login / logout redirection. Have a closer look at *Extensions - Module Manager* (*Figure 3*).

Figure 3: Login module options

The advantage of the form, which is delivered by login module, is that there is no necessity for the user to click a link before the log in form appears. If this behavior is not necessary or you don't want to have the login form as a module, it is also possible to create the form via a component. Therefore you have to create menu items with the appropriate menu item types concerning your needs (Figure 4).

Select a Menu Item Type:

Contacts

[List All Contact Categories](#)
[List Contacts in a Category](#)
[Single Contact](#)
[Featured Contacts](#)

Newsfeeds

[List All News Feed Categories](#)
[List News Feeds in a Category](#)
[Single News Feed](#)

Articles

[Archived Articles](#)
[Single Article](#)
[List All Categories](#)
[Category Blog](#)
[Category List](#)
[Featured Articles](#)
[Create Article](#)

Search

[List Search Results](#)

Users Manager

[Login Form](#)
[User Profile](#)
[Edit User Profile](#)
[Registration Form](#)
[Username Reminder Request](#)
[Password Reset](#)

Figure 4: Menu item types for users

Additional profile fields

In the past it was only possible with additional extensions, to have additional fields in the registration form. To solve that issue and to connect the user data to the contact component, Joomla! 1.7 core comes with a plug-in called *User Profiles*. In *Extensions - Plug-in Manager* you can

activate and configure the plug-in (See also [Contact component](#)) The module provides several additional fields, even a *Terms of service* option, which user have to check during the registration process to accept the terms of service (*Figure 5*).

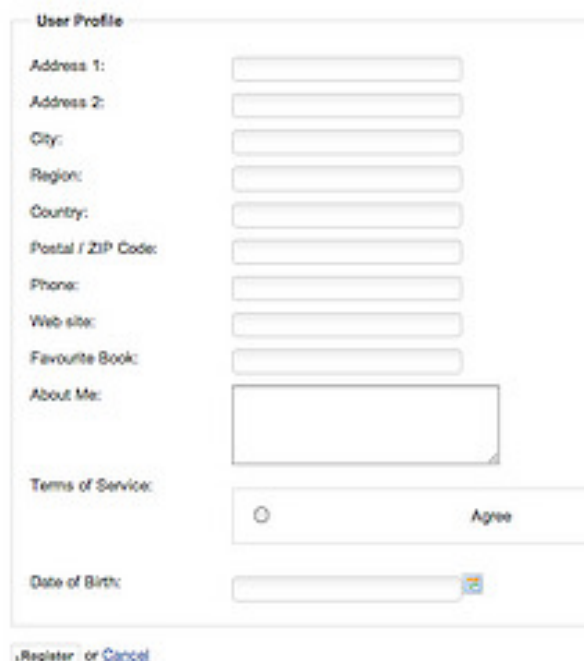
The image shows a 'User Profile' registration form. It contains several text input fields for personal information: Address 1, Address 2, City, Region, Country, Postal / ZIP Code, Phone, Web site, Favourite Book, and About Me (a larger text area). Below these is a 'Terms of Service' section with a radio button and the word 'Agree'. At the bottom is a 'Date of Birth' field with a calendar icon. At the very bottom are two buttons: 'Register' and 'Cancel'.

Figure 5: Additional profile fields

Tip: For better membership management functionality including extended registration form, additional profile and registration fields, membership approval workflows, profile tabs, etc. a membership management extension like e.g. Community Builder³⁶ is needed.

USER GROUPS

The idea of a user group is to create sets of permissions.

"If you want to be an author on our site, you'll need the following permissions."

Instead of assigning these permissions to every user they are assigned to a group. The user can be assigned to one or more groups. Imagine you have 10.000 users in four different groups. It's easy for the administrator to manage the permissions for the groups. Without groups you have to change every user account manually. If you use groups you only have to change permissions once!

In Joomla! 1.7 it's up to you to configure any number of user groups. In *User Manager - Groups*, you have an overview of all the groups, which are in core Joomla! (*Figure 6*).

³⁶ <http://extensions.joomla.org/extensions/clients-a-communities/communities/210>

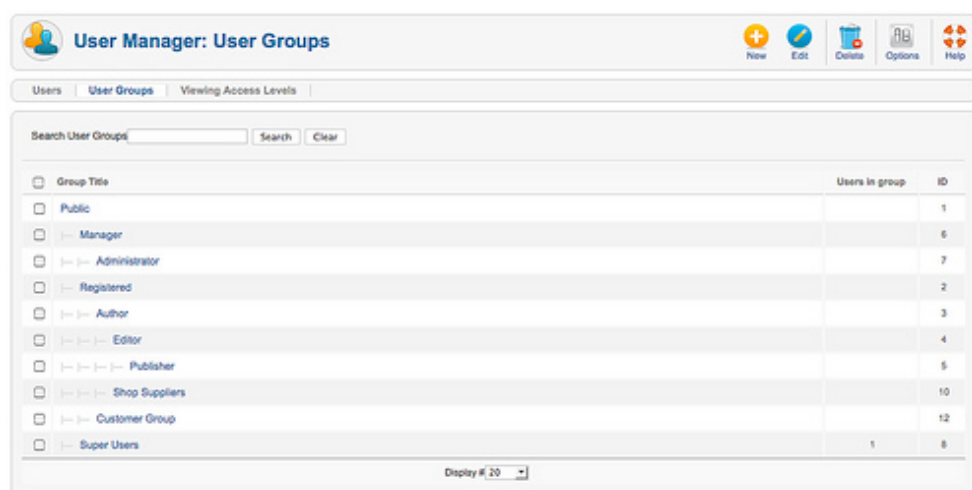


Figure 6: User group

The default setup is the same as it was for Joomla! 1.5. If you are happy with the structure it is not necessary to change anything.

Default permissions for website front end user groups

- **Registered group**

A registered user can log in, edit his own credentials and see parts of the site that non-registered users cannot see.

- **Author group**

The author can do everything that a registered user can. An author can also write articles and modify his or her own content. There is generally a link in the user menu for this.

- **Editor group**

The editor can do everything that an author can. An editor can also write and edit all articles that appears in the front end.

- **Publisher group**

The publisher can do everything that an editor can. A publisher can also write articles and edit every piece of information that appears in the front end. In addition, a publisher can decide whether articles are published or not.

Default permissions for website back end user groups

- **Manager group**

A manager can create content and can see various pieces information about the system. He or she is not allowed to:

- Administer users
- Install modules and components
- Upgrade a user to super administrator or modify a super administrator

- Work on the menu item Site | Global Configuration
- Send a mass mailing to all users
- Change and/or install templates and language files

- **Administrator**

An administrator is not allowed to:

- Upgrade a user to super administrator or modify a super administrator
- Work on the menu item Site | Global Configuration
- Send a mass mailing to all users
- Change and/or install templates and language files

- **Super Administrator or Super user**

This user is allowed to execute all functions in Joomla! administration. Only a super administrator can add other super administrators.

ACCESS LEVELS

User groups can be assigned to access levels. So we have a user, connected to a group, connected to an access level (*Figure 7, Figure 8*)

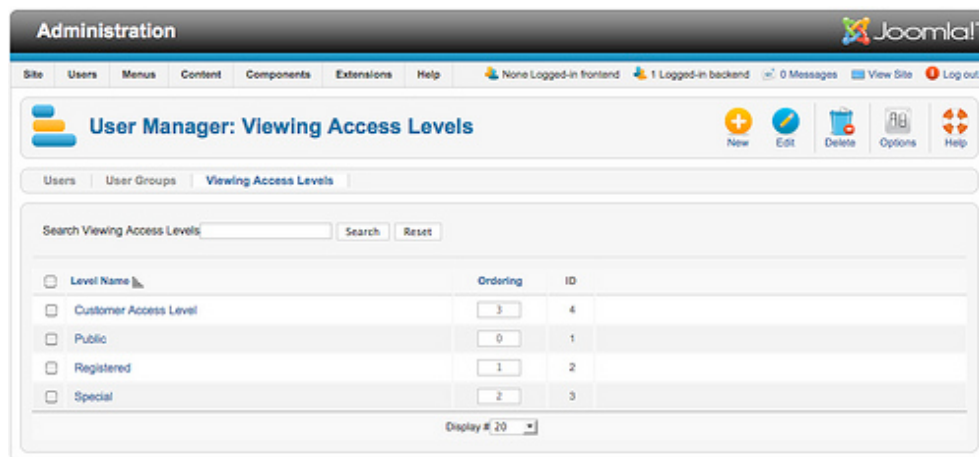


Figure 7: Access levels

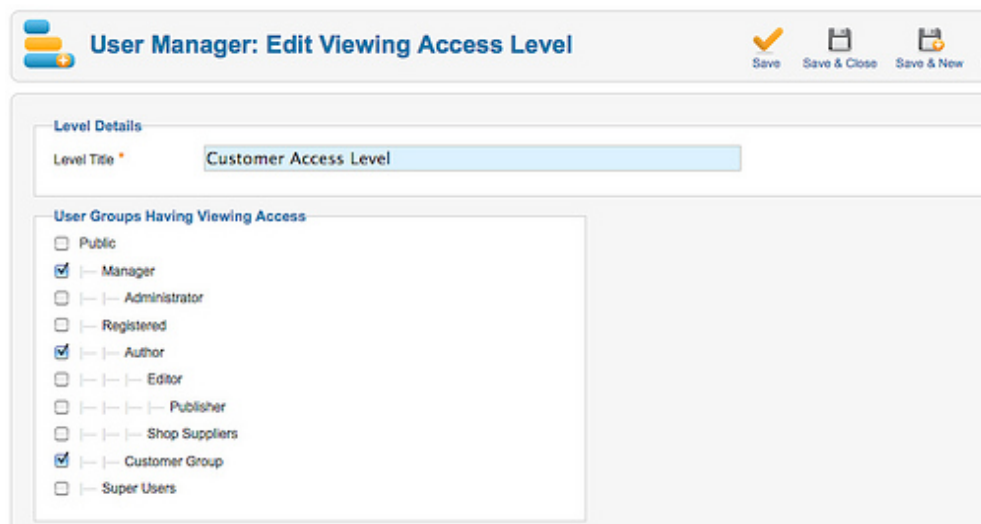


Figure 8: Groups assigned to an access level

Why access levels?

As we have seen, access levels are a bundle of groups. With the combination of group permissions and access levels it is possible to solve every use case. In an article e.g. you can limit the accessibility to an access level (*Figure 9*).

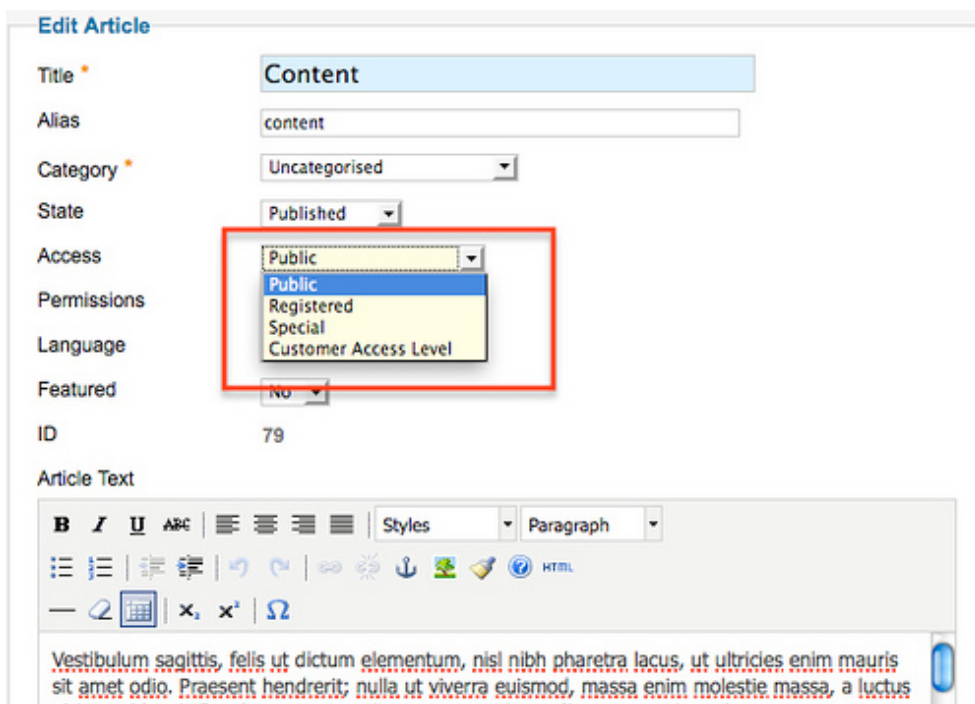


Figure 9: Access levels in an article

The new system is a big step forward for Joomla!. Many users suffered from the lack of configurable groups, access level and permissions.

Such functionality is needed in order to limit access to content and functions in large organizations or to support e-commerce and subscriptions based services use cases on Joomla websites. The Joomla ACL system is not only available for Joomla content and core functions, but also available for use in Joomla extensions. For instance Community Builder and other memberships management solutions can take advantage of this enhanced ACL functionality.

Now everything is possible in the field of permissions!

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Chapter 13

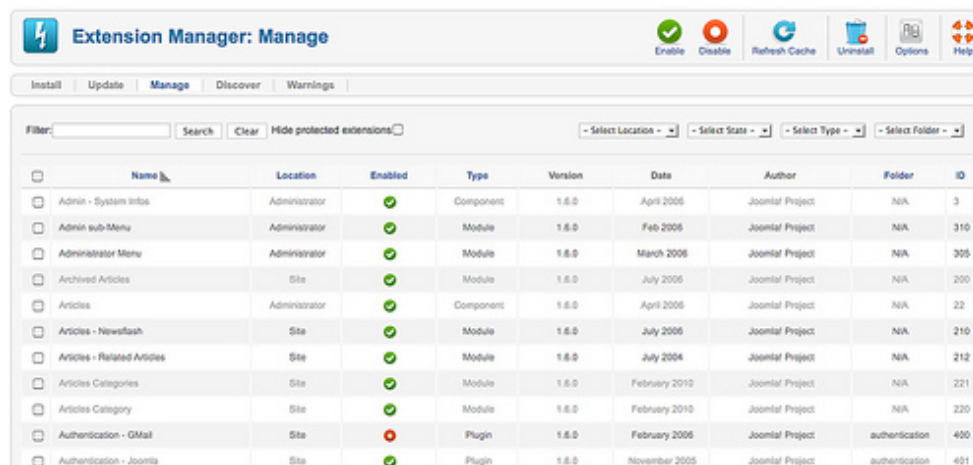
Extension Management

There is a lot in the core package of Joomla!. Words like *components*, *modules*, *plug-ins*, *templates* and *languages* you have already heard before. Besides these well known parts, Joomla! also consists of lesser known parts like *libraries* and *packages*. Additional *components*, *modules*, *plugins* and *languages* are listed in the Joomla! extension directory³⁷. The Joomla! project has no central place for templates and libraries. The reason for this is simple. Libraries are developed outside of the Joomla project and many were also used by other open source projects. Templates are something very individual and are, therefore, available on the websites of their designers. A central directory especially for templates would be helpful in the future.

With the extension manager in Joomla! 1.7 you can install, update, discover and manage extensions directly from your Joomla! administration.

MANAGING EXTENSIONS

Let's have a look at all your installed 110 extensions in *Extensions* → *Extension Manager* → *Manager*. You can filter this list by various parameters. Some extensions are protected. Your Joomla! installation would no longer work if you uninstalled these protected extensions (*Figure 1*).



The screenshot shows the Joomla! Extension Manager interface. At the top, there's a header with the title 'Extension Manager: Manage' and several icons for actions: Enable (green check), Disable (red X), Refresh Cache (circular arrow), Uninstall (trash), Options (gear), and Help (question mark). Below the header is a navigation bar with tabs: Install, Update, Manage (active), Discover, and Warnings. A search bar is present with a 'Filter:' label, a 'Search' button, a 'Clear' button, and a checkbox for 'Hide protected extensions'. There are also dropdown menus for 'Select Location', 'Select State', 'Select Type', and 'Select Folder'. The main content area is a table with the following columns: Name, Location, Enabled, Type, Version, Date, Author, Folder, and ID. The table lists 110 installed extensions, including 'Admin - System Infos', 'Admin sub-Menu', 'Administrator Menu', 'Archived Articles', 'Articles', 'Articles - Newsletter', 'Articles - Related Articles', 'Articles Categories', 'Articles Category', 'Authentication - Gmail', and 'Authentication - Joomla'.

Name	Location	Enabled	Type	Version	Date	Author	Folder	ID
Admin - System Infos	Administrator	✓	Component	1.6.0	April 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	3
Admin sub-Menu	Administrator	✓	Module	1.6.0	Feb 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	310
Administrator Menu	Administrator	✓	Module	1.6.0	March 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	305
Archived Articles	Site	✓	Module	1.6.0	July 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	200
Articles	Administrator	✓	Component	1.6.0	April 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	22
Articles - Newsletter	Site	✓	Module	1.6.0	July 2006	Joomla! Project	N/A	210
Articles - Related Articles	Site	✓	Module	1.6.0	July 2004	Joomla! Project	N/A	212
Articles Categories	Site	✓	Module	1.6.0	February 2010	Joomla! Project	N/A	221
Articles Category	Site	✓	Module	1.6.0	February 2010	Joomla! Project	N/A	220
Authentication - Gmail	Site	✗	Plugin	1.6.0	February 2006	Joomla! Project	authentication	400
Authentication - Joomla	Site	✓	Plugin	1.6.0	November 2005	Joomla! Project	authentication	401

Figure 1: Table with all installed extensions

In this area you can enable, disable and uninstall extensions. Enabling and disabling works just like a light switch. You simply switch the extension on and off, all the related data are still kept. If you uninstall an extension, it will be deleted. Often extensions, usually components, create additional database tables while installing. It's up to the component de-installation routines,

³⁷ <http://extensions.joomla.org/>

whether these tables will be deleted or not during de-installation. Check the manual or readme file in advance to avoid surprises.

The last icon in the toolbar is the cache icon. Every extension is able to cache data. You can clear this cache separately for every extension. If your Joomla! site attracts lots of visitors and you don't want to clear the whole cache for performance reasons, you may need this function.

If you filter the list for **libraries**, you will find these four articles with the corresponding version number:

- *Joomla! Application Framework*, which is the real 'core' of the Joomla! 1.7 CMS. All the other extensions are built upon this framework.
- *PHPMailer*³⁸ is a class, written in PHP for sending emails. This is used in the *mail to* component.
- *SimplePie*³⁹ is a class, written in PHP for managing RSS and Atom feeds. This is used in the *newsfeeds* component.
- *phputf8*⁴⁰ is a UTF-8⁴¹-capable library of functions mirroring PHP's own string functions. You can get an idea what this library does by reading UTF-8 and PHP⁴².

If you filter the list for packages, you will find nothing in Joomla! core. If you installed a language other than English, you will find that language package there.

UPDATING EXTENSIONS

In this area, third-party extensions and the version of Joomla! core itself are listed. Here you can check for available extension updates available by clicking the *Find Updates* icon. If Joomla! finds an extension update and you want to update automatically, you have to fill in the FTP settings form in *Global Configuration* → *Server* → *FTP settings*. Then select the extension you wish to update and click the *Update* icon. The process is fully automatic and you are going to receive messages and hints, depending on the extension, while updating.

INSTALLING EXTENSIONS

You can install extensions in three different ways (*Figure 2*):

³⁸ <http://phpmailer.worxware.com>

³⁹ <http://simplepie.org/>

⁴⁰ <http://sourceforge.net/projects/phputf8/>

⁴¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UTF-8>

⁴² <http://www.phpwact.org/php/i18n/utf-8>

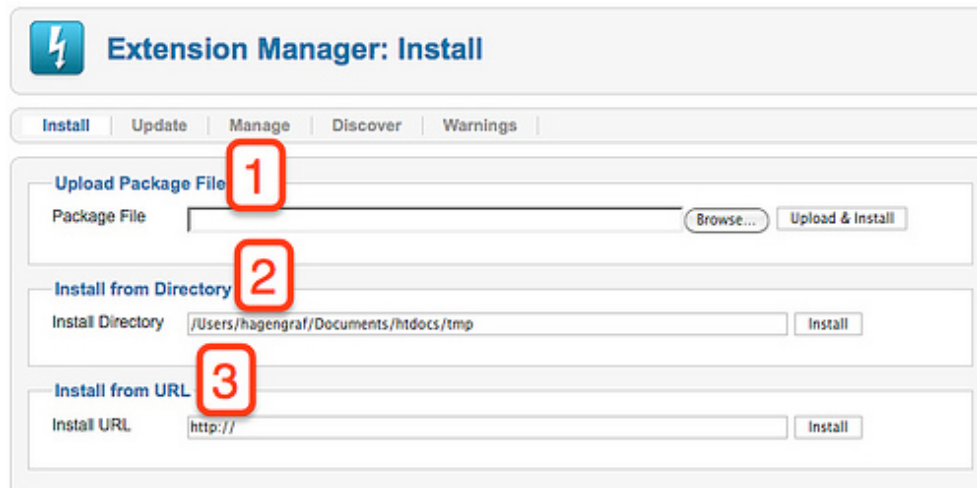


Figure 2: Installing extensions

- **Upload a Package file**

If you have downloaded a zip file to your local PC that contains a Joomla! extension, you can use this option to upload and install your extension.

- **Install from Directory**

If you have uploaded a zip file at your document root directory on your web server that contains a Joomla! extension, you can use this option to extract and install your extension.

- **Install from URL**

If you know the URL of a zip file that contains a Joomla! extension, you can use this option to download, extract and install your extension.

FINDING EXTENSIONS

Sometimes things go wrong during the installation process, like files being too big, permissions not being set correctly or for other strange reasons. In this area, Joomla! tries to find extensions, which are not installed but nevertheless exist in the file directory. If one or more extensions are discovered, you can install them by using the FTP feature. Don't forget the correct FTP credentials in *Global Configuration* → *Server* → *FTP settings*.

By using the discover operation, you can install multiple extensions at the same time!

WARNINGS

Error messages related to installations and updates will appear in this area. If you can't solve the problem by yourself, google the message text, you'll usually find a solution or at least some advice.

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Chapter 14

Core Extensions

As we have already seen in the extension manager, the Joomla! 1.7 package consists of many built-in extensions. We have already come in touch with a few of them. As a website user, you probably don't care much about the extension you are using as long as you find that it is working. As an administrator, however, you have to know exactly what is going on. We have already looked at several Joomla! extensions like the *content* extension, which allows you to write and manage articles as well as publish them in different ways on the website. The *user* extension relates to users, the *category* extension to categories and so on.

In the following chapters, I am going to cover the functionality of additional extensions that are part of the Joomla! core. In the *Components* menu, you will see *Banners*, *Contacts*, *Messaging*, *Newsfeeds*, *Redirects*, *Search* and *Weblinks*. We will have a look at these components including related modules and plugins, and last but not least, the *Mass Mail Users* feature of the *User* component, which allows you to send mass mails to all users.

BANNERS

The banner component provides the option to display advertising banners on your site. A banner can consist of graphics or custom HTML code. Every time your site is accessed, a different banner will be displayed from your banner administration. You can click on these banners and they are linked to the client's site. The banner component offers client, category, and banner administration as well as detailed analyses. I will guide you through a complete real life example in this chapter.

If you would like to sell advertisements on your website, there are three things you will need: clients, banners and pages on your website to display the banners. Oh, I forgot one. You also need traffic on your site. The more traffic, the better.

Depending on the contract terms you have with your clients, you may also need a tracking overview with all the impressions and clicks.

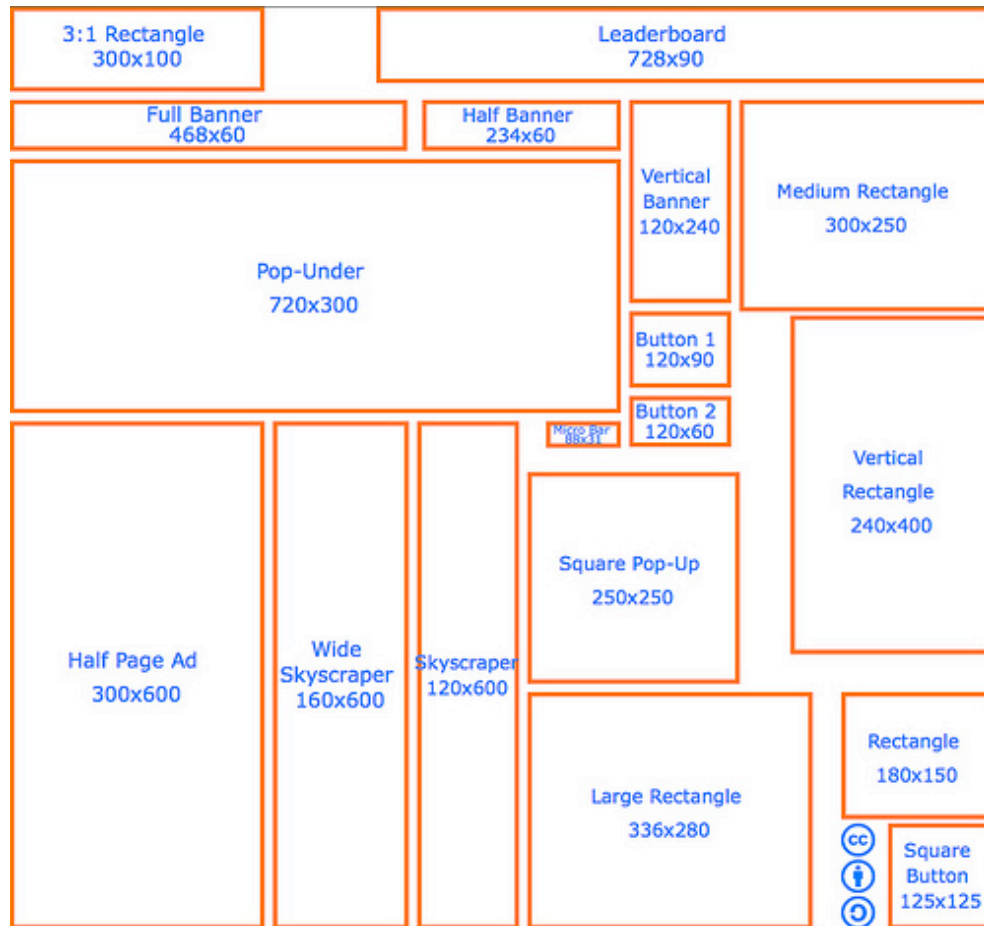
Let's begin with the client. I live in a tourist area and local businesses want to advertise their services. Joomla! offers yearly, monthly, weekly, daily and unlimited subscriptions. You can configure the default subscription type in *Components - Banner - Options*.

My client would like to pay a monthly fee to appear on all pages with three different rotating banners. I add the client in *Components - Banner - Clients - New* and fill in the form (*Figure 1*).

The screenshot shows the Joomla! Banner Manager interface for adding a new client. The form is titled "Banner Manager: New Client". It contains several input fields and dropdown menus. The "Client Name" field is filled with "fimi". The "Contact Name" field is filled with "Christine Graf". The "Contact email" field is filled with "cgraf@fimi.com". The "State" dropdown is set to "Published". The "Purchase Type" dropdown is set to "Monthly". The "Track Impressions" dropdown is set to "Yes". The "Track Clicks" dropdown is set to "Yes". The "ID" field is set to "0". There is a "Metadata Options" section with a "Meta Keywords" field containing "holidays, southern, apartments". The "Use Own Prefix" radio button is set to "No". The "Meta Keyword Prefix" field is filled with "fimi". There is also an "Additional Information" section. The form has buttons for "Save", "Save & Close", "Save & New", "Cancel", and "Help".

Figure 1: Adding a client

Before I can create individual banners, I have to create a banner category first. The categories are very useful because later on in the banner module, I can choose from which client and which category a banner should be displayed (*Components - Banner - Categories*).



*Figure 2: Standard web banner sizes*⁴³

I am free to choose the size of each banner but normally you will use the standard web banner sizes. (*Figure 2*)

The client would like to have three banners in leaderboard size (728 x 90 pixels). I'll create them in *Components - Banner - Banner*. I choose the category and the client, upload the banner and fill in the size. In *Publishing Options* I can configure several options, e.g., the start and finish date for publishing the banner. This is especially useful for time-limited subscription plans. There is also an option for re-setting clicks and impressions (*Figure 3*, *Figure 4*).

⁴³ http://adzaar.com/docs/standard_ad_sizes

Figure 3: Adding banner form

	Name	Published	Sticky	Client	Category	Ordering	Impressions	Clicks	Meta Keywords	Purchase Type	Language	ID
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France (Alias: spend-your-holidays-in-fitou-southern-france)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fimidi	Client banners	1	32 of Unlimited	2 - 6.25%		Monthly	All	5
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France (Alias: spend-your-holidays-in-fitou-southern-france)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fimidi	Client banners	2	29 of Unlimited	2 - 6.90%		Monthly	All	7
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France (Alias: spend-your-holidays-in-fitou-southern-france)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fimidi	Client banners	3	31 of Unlimited	2 - 6.45%		Monthly	All	8

Figure 4: Banners in Administration

The next step is to create and/or activate one or more banner modules. For each banner size I need one module. In my case, all the banners are the same size, so one module will suffice. I go to *Extensions - Modules* and filter for *Banners*. At the moment there is nothing there, so I create a module by clicking the *New* icon. Depending on the template, I have to choose a position. In my case I'll choose *position 12* from the *Beez2* template. The banner will then appear above the content. In *Basic Settings* you can configure a lot more. It is also possible to show the module in your content (*Read more in chapter: [Modules](#)*).

The *Search by Tag* field is an interesting feature. When it is used, the banner will be displayed when banner keywords (set in banner) and page keywords (set in article and other places) match. Another option to control the visibility of the module and the banners is the *Menu Assignment*. One very important feature is the possibility to write a header and/or footer text. In some countries advertisements have to be labeled (*Figure 5*).

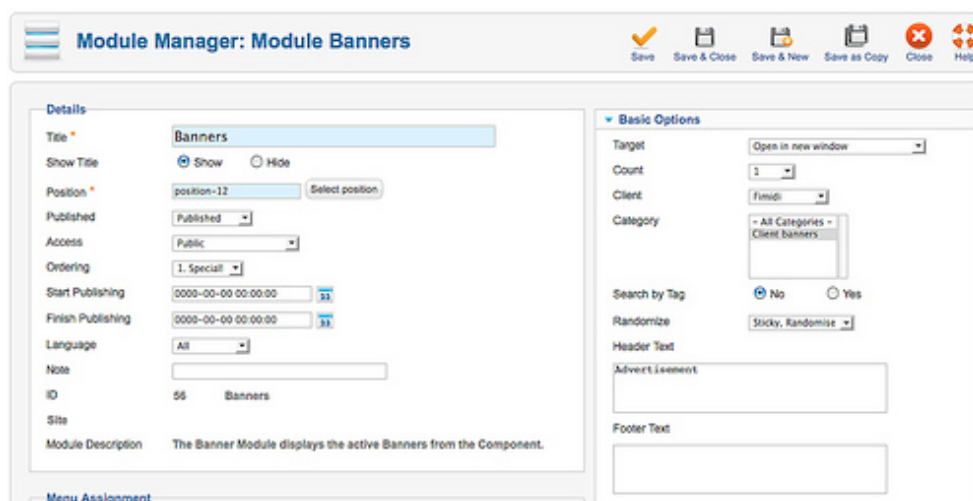


Figure 5: Banners module

The banner will now appear on the website. Depending on the configuration and the amount of banners, a different banner will appear each time you refresh the page. The banner itself is linked to the client's website and if you move the mouse across the image, a tool tip with the banner title will be shown (Figure 6).

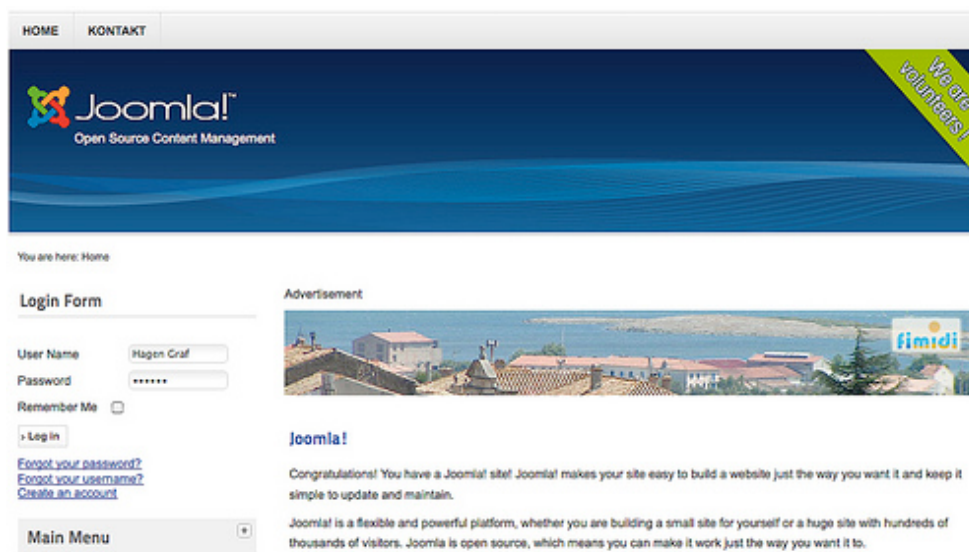


Figure 6: Banners on website

If set correctly, all impressions and clicks of the banner will now be tracked by the banner component. These trackings can be viewed in *Components - Tracks* and filtered by date, client, category and type (clicks or impressions) (Figure 7).

Export

Delete Tracks

Options

Help

Banners

Categories

Clients

Tracks

Begin date: End date:

Select Client

Select Category

Type

Name	Client	Category	Type	Count	Date
Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France	Finidi	Client banners	Impression	5	2011-02-10 11:00
Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France	Finidi	Client banners	Click	2	2011-02-10 11:00
Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France	Finidi	Client banners	Impression	12	2011-02-10 12:00
Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France	Finidi	Client banners	Click	2	2011-02-10 12:00
Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France	Finidi	Client banners	Impression	18	2011-02-10 13:00
Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France	Finidi	Client banners	Impression	2	2011-02-10 13:00
Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France	Finidi	Client banners	Impression	4	2011-02-10 14:00
Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France	Finidi	Client banners	Impression	1	2011-02-10 14:00
Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France	Finidi	Client banners	Impression	1	2011-02-10 14:00
Spend your holidays in Fitou, southern France	Finidi	Client banners	Click	1	2011-02-10 14:00

Display # 20

Figure 7: Banner tracking

CONTACTS

Every website needs a contact form. Depending on the provider of the website sometimes you may need only one, sometimes more of these forms. If it is a website for a company with more than one department, they may want to have a contact form for every department. Perhaps you would like to display a contact form for every employee or every user account.

All of this can be done by using the Joomla! contact component.

As we have already seen (*Read more in chapter: [Contact Form](#)*), it's quite easy to set up a simple contact form. Simply create a contact, assign it to a category and create a menu item.

EXAMPLE

If several contact forms are needed, you should think about the underlying structure. Similar to article categories, it is possible to assign contact categories to menu items. As a result, you will see a list of contacts assigned to that category. If you click on the name or the title of these contacts, you will see more details and the form itself.

I have tried different scenarios with the contact component and the possibilities are amazing! As everywhere in Joomla! 1.7 you have the option to create nested categories and different menu item types. In options (*Components - Contact - Options*), you can, for example, configure the appearance of the contact form (*Slider, Tab, no formatting*) and set an impressive number of other parameters.

As an example I have created a contact area for our company with three contact forms for different kinds of inquiries and a contact form for each team member. By clicking on the links, the contact form and additional details will appear (*Figure 1*).

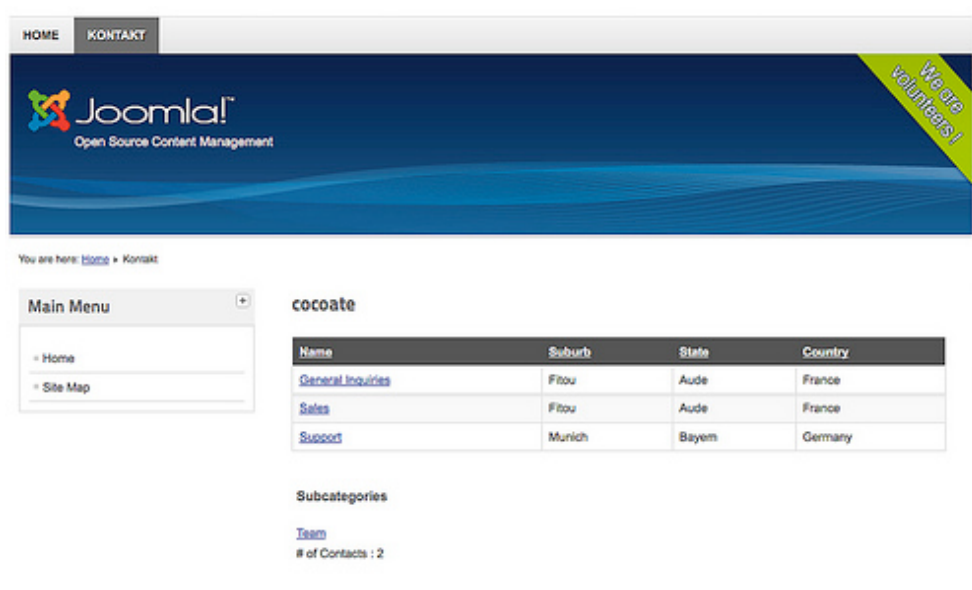


Figure 1: Contact area

For this example, I have created two categories: *cocoate* and *team*. The *team* category is a sub category of *cocoate*. It would have been possible to add an image and a description but I have decided to fill the title field only (Figure 2).

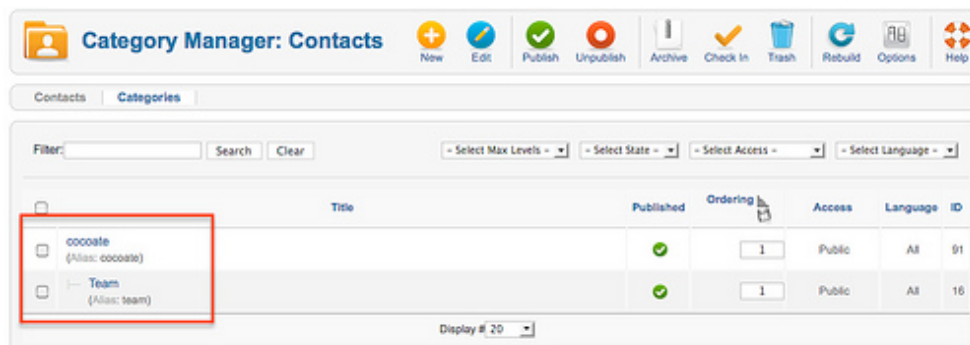


Figure 2: Contact categories

For each contact form I need a contact with an email address. Contacts can be assigned to users or stand alone. In this case, I have created three stand alone contacts related to the *cocoate* category without linking them to a user. I have also created two contacts related to the *team* category and additionally related to an existing user account (Figure 3).

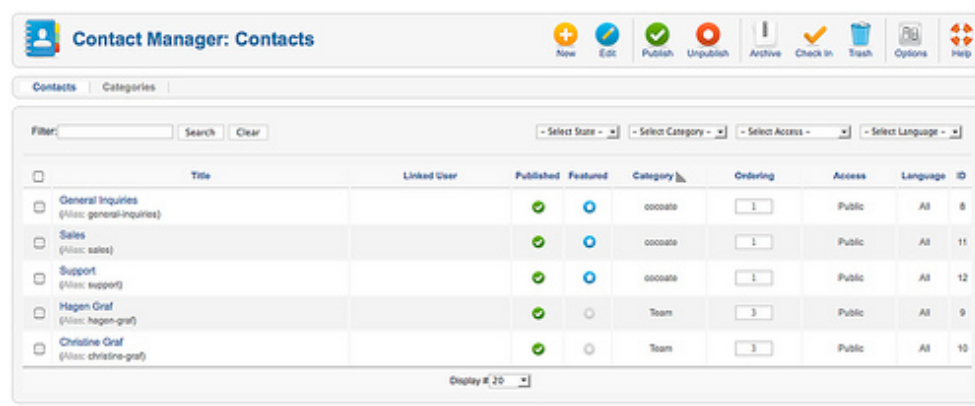


Figure 3: Contacts

If any of the data changes, such as a phone number, for example, it would be nice for related users to be able to make these changes directly from their user profile on the website without having to access the administrator area. For this task Joomla! provides the *User-Profile* plug-in. You just have to activate it in *Extensions - Plug-ins*. In the user profile, a new area is displayed for the profile fields, which is connected to the contact component.

MESSAGING

Messages is a core component of Joomla and a built-in private messaging system for backend users. It allows you to send and receive messages to other users with permission to access the administrator area.

The messaging component is very easy to use; however, users often forget the possibility to configure the component in *Components - Messages - My Settings*. You can have the system email you every new message, delete them after an x amount of days, and you can also lock your inbox.

NEWSFEEDS

Feeds are very handy. It is possible to subscribe to different kind of news and information. Unfortunately even today, often people don't use them for some inexplicable reasons. Thirty years ago you had to buy and read a newspaper to get to know the 'News'. Fifteen years ago you opened your browser and visited one website after another to get to know the "News". Today, you can still do both but it's also possible to use a feed aggregator. Google's reader⁴⁴ and the dynamic bookmark toolbar of your browser (*e.g. Firefox*) are quite popular. The Joomla! 1.6 *Newsfeeds* component is an aggregator as well. Not as sophisticated like Google's reader, but also quite useful.

The news feed component allows you to collect feeds from other sites and publish it on your site.

In today's world of social media everyone probably has dozens of user accounts. Often videos and images are stored on youtube.com and flickr.com. In a company, the situation is even more complex. Imagine how much information is available as newsfeeds about a project like Joomla! or about your company.

A feed reader on our website

In the next example, we want to build a feed reader on our website. I'll try to collect all the bits and pieces which are created around our company and list them in a table. We have a vimeo account for our videos, a flickr account for images, several twitter accounts and that's still not all :-)

First, I create a newsfeeds category called cocoate in *Components* → *Newsfeeds* → *Categories* and afterwards for every feed an entry in *Components* → *Newsfeeds* → *Feeds* (*Figure 1*). The single problem is often finding the correct feedlink. For example, our vimeo video feed link looks like this: <http://vimeo.com/cocoate/videos/rss>. The Flickr feed link of our photos looks more complicated (http://api.flickr.com/services/feeds/photos_public.gne?id=17963290@N00&lang=en-us&format=rss_200).

In the publishing options you have to enter how many feed entries you want to show and the number of seconds before the cache is refreshed. Joomla! only stores the amount of items which you configured in its cache. This is an important detail because in some countries it is not allowed to store the content from a public newsfeed in your database.

⁴⁴ <http://www.google.com/reader>

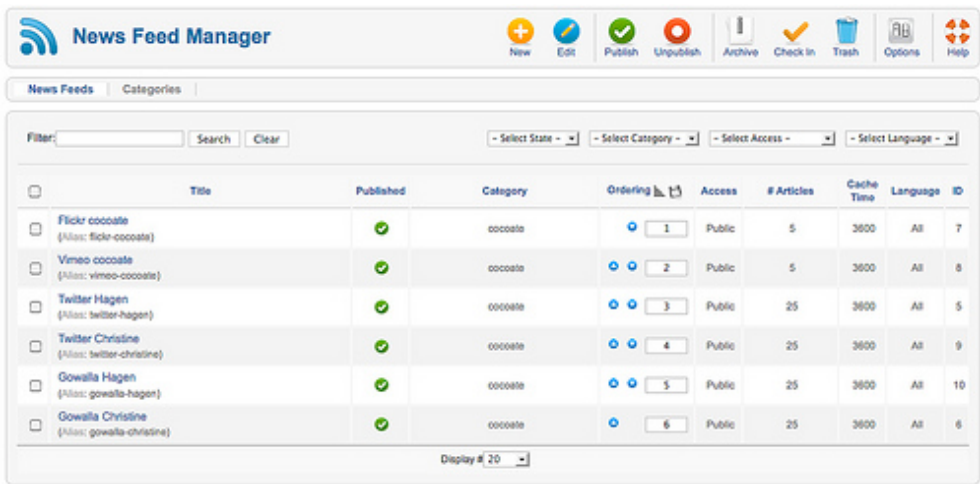


Figure 1: A collection of newfeeds

Finally, you have to create a menu item in a menu of your choice. The *Newsfeeds* component comes with three different layouts:

- 1. List of all News Feed Categories
- 2. List of News Feed in a Category
- 3. Just a Single Newsfeed

I chose the second one because I have all my feeds in one category. On the website, Joomla! aggregates my feeds, e.g. the Vimeo video feed (*Figure 2*)

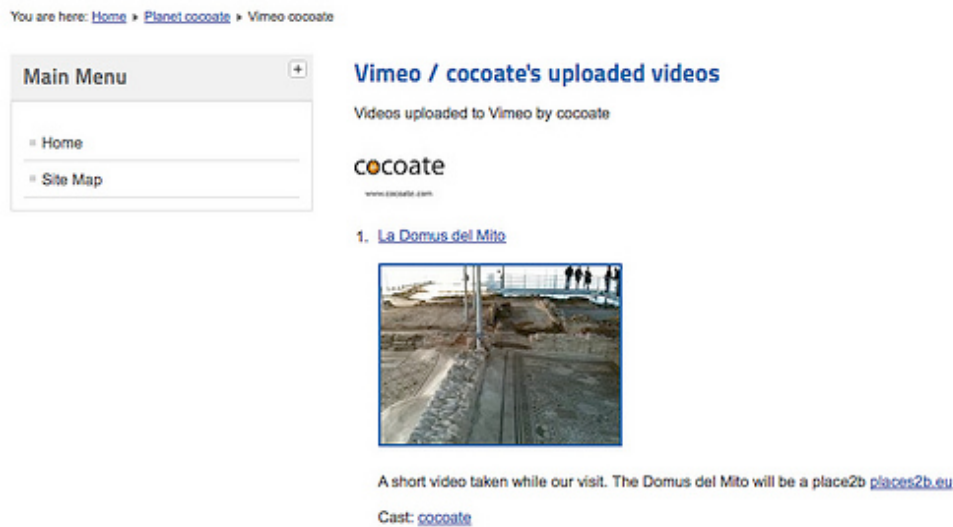
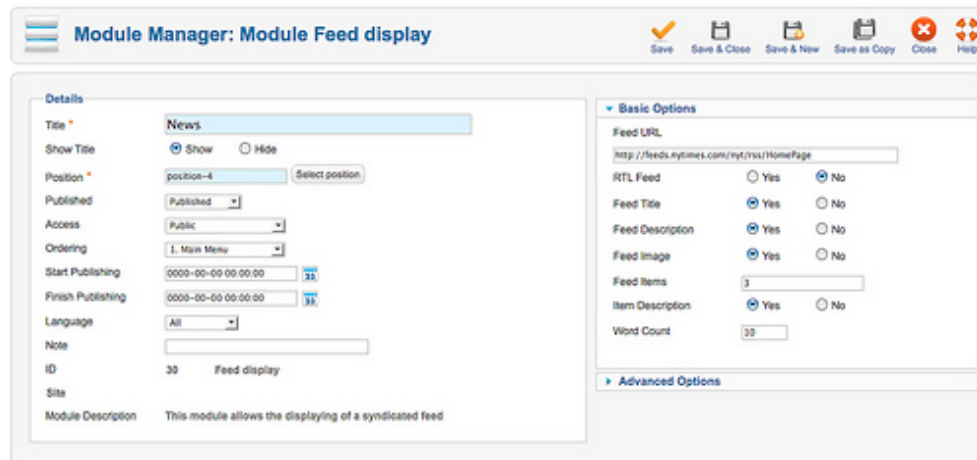


Figure 2: News feed data

When you create a news feed, you can configure in *Display Options* among other things whether you want to display the feeds image or not. Also, you can limit the number of characters of the content which should be displayed. This feature is very useful if the feed contains longer

articles or if you use the *Feed Display* module. You can create one in *Extensions - Modules - New*. Here is e.g. the New York Times feed (<http://feeds.nytimes.com/nyt/rss/HomePage>). Configure the module at *position-4* and configure the *Basic Options* (Figure 3).



The screenshot shows the Joomla! Module Manager interface for configuring a 'Module Feed display'. The title bar reads 'Module Manager: Module Feed display'. The interface is divided into two main sections: 'Details' on the left and 'Basic Options' on the right. In the 'Details' section, the 'Title' is set to 'News', 'Show Title' is checked, 'Position' is 'position-4', 'Published' is 'Published', 'Access' is 'Public', 'Ordering' is '1. Main Menu', 'Start Publishing' and 'Finish Publishing' are set to '0000-00-00 00:00:00', 'Language' is 'All', 'Note' is empty, 'ID' is '30', 'Feed display' is selected, and the 'Module Description' is 'This module allows the displaying of a syndicated feed'. The 'Basic Options' section includes a 'Feed URL' of 'http://feeds.nytimes.com/nyt/rss/HomePage', 'RTL Feed' is 'No', 'Feed Title' is 'Yes', 'Feed Description' is 'Yes', 'Feed Image' is 'Yes', 'Feed Items' is '3', 'Item Description' is 'Yes', and 'Word Count' is '30'. There is also an 'Advanced Options' section which is currently collapsed. The top right of the window contains several icons for saving and closing the configuration.

Figure 3: News feed module

The result on the webpage will look like in Figure 4.

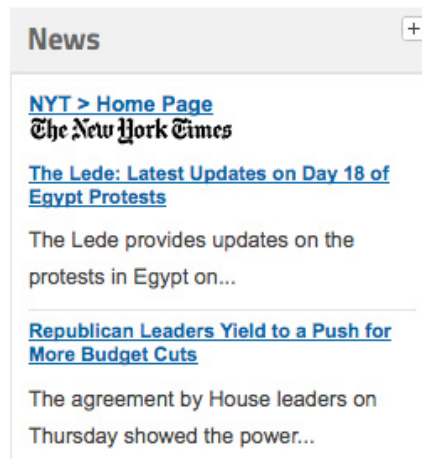


Figure 4: News feed module on website

Redirects

The redirect manager is a wonderful idea. It redirects a visitor to a valid page when he enters a path on your website that doesn't exist. It is possible that it existed before and was added to the search index of a search engine, or someone stored it at another website. This problem usually occurs after relaunching a website.

The redirect component is very convenient. If someone tries to access a path that doesn't exist, Joomla! will show the *404 - not found* page and simultaneously create a new entry in the redirect manager.

When accessing *Components - Redirects*, you'll see these links (*Figure 1*). The *System - redirect* plug-in has to be activated in *Extensions → Plug-ins*.

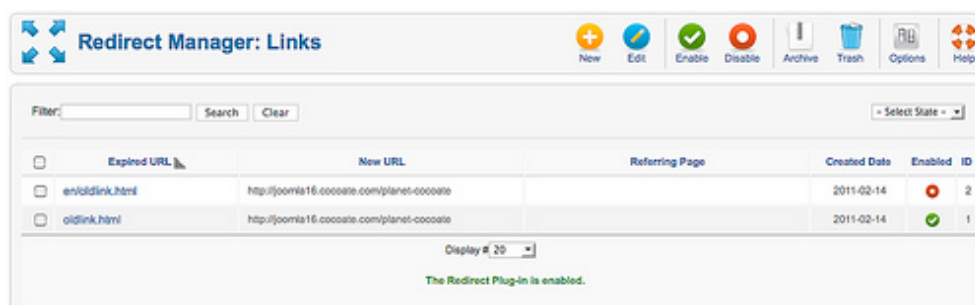


Figure 1: Redirect Manager

You can now edit the links and add a new redirect URL. The next time the old path is accessed, the redirect component ensures that the visitor is redirected to the new address. You may create redirects on your own if you are aware of any old paths that no longer exist.

The component uses the web server's rewrite system. Currently, only *Apache* is supported with an installed *mod_rewrite*. In *Site → System Information* you can see which web server you are using (*Figure 2*)

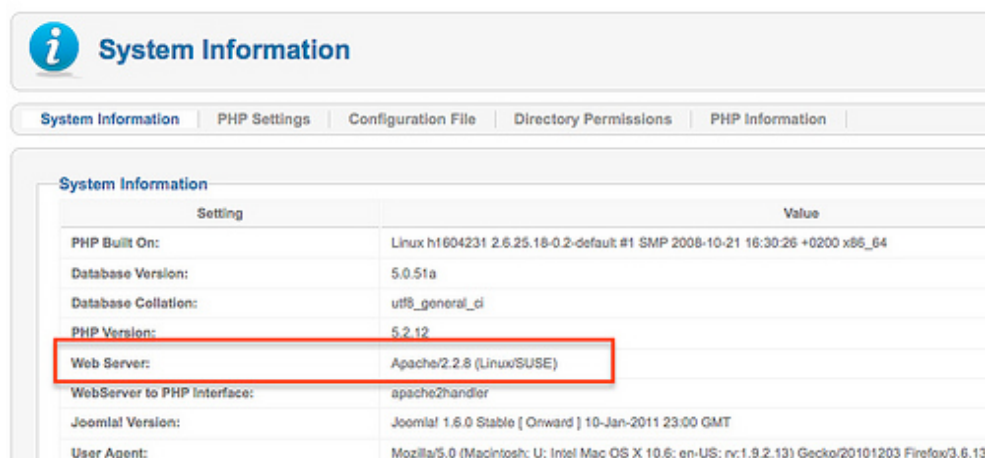
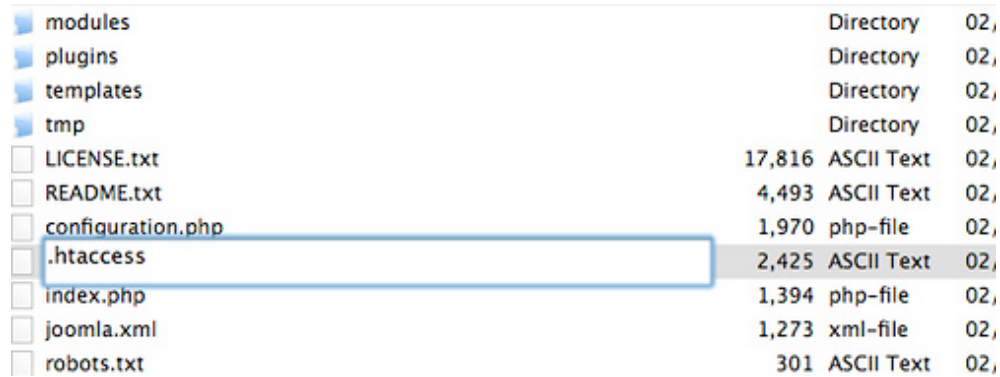


Figure 2: System Information

When using Apache, go to *Global Configuration* → *Site* → *SEO Settings* → *Use Apache mod_rewrite* and switch it to *Yes*. Afterwards, rename the file *htaccess.txt* to *.htaccess*. In some cases renaming the file may not be possible because the file starts with a dot. I use my ftp client or the shell for renaming the file (*Figure 3*).

A screenshot of a file manager interface showing a list of files and directories. The file '.htaccess' is highlighted with a blue selection box. The list includes directories like 'modules', 'plugins', 'templates', and 'tmp', and files like 'LICENSE.txt', 'README.txt', 'configuration.php', '.htaccess', 'index.php', 'joomla.xml', and 'robots.txt'. Each entry shows its size, type, and a permission value (02,).

modules	Directory	02,
plugins	Directory	02,
templates	Directory	02,
tmp	Directory	02,
LICENSE.txt	17,816 ASCII Text	02,
README.txt	4,493 ASCII Text	02,
configuration.php	1,970 php-file	02,
.htaccess	2,425 ASCII Text	02,
index.php	1,394 php-file	02,
joomla.xml	1,273 xml-file	02,
robots.txt	301 ASCII Text	02,

Figure 3: .htaccess

SEARCH

People expect to be able to search content on your website.

Joomla! uses full text search. Full text means that Joomla! searches for all keywords you enter in the search box directly in the database.

This may sound obvious to most people, but it isn't. Many search engines first create a search index consisting of words used on your website. During the actual search, the search index is browsed for matches. These matches are linked to the actual content. The search result page is based on these matches and links.

Index-based search is faster than full text search but the index has to be updated with every website change; otherwise the new content cannot be found. In order to compensate for the performance advantage of the index-based search function, Joomla! is highly configurable.

Search Term Analysis

To get a first glimpse of what visitors are searching for on your site, you have to switch on the statistics feature (*Components → Search → Options: Gather Search Statistics - Yes*). Then all the terms will be recorded and listed in *Components - Search*. Don't forget to also switch on *Show Search results* (*Figure 1*).

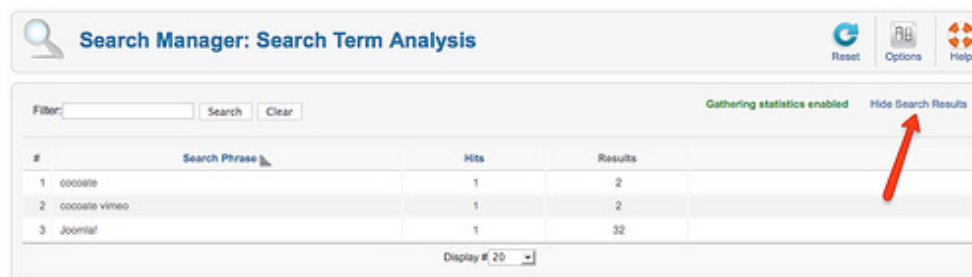


Figure 1: Search statistics

User interface

You can choose between a search box appearing on various pages of your website or a link to a search form. The search extension provides a search module for the single box and a search layout for menu items. The search module is activated by default and most templates provide a special search position for it. It offers numerous options, including text configuration of the buttons as well as setting the box width (*Figure 2*).

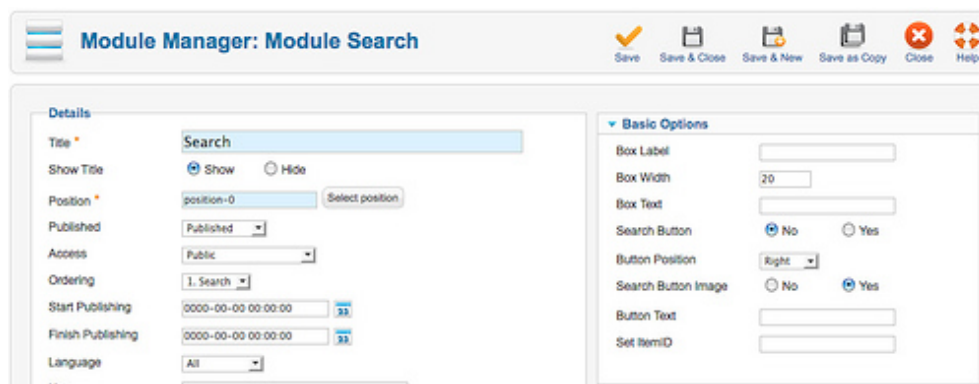


Figure 2: Search module

The search result page consists of a more detailed search form at the top of the page and the search results below (*Figure 3*).

Search Keyword:

Total: 34 results found.

Search for:

☒ All words ☐ Any words ☐ Exact Phrase Ordering:

Search Only:

☐ Categories ☐ Contacts ☐ Articles ☐ Newsfeeds ☐ Weblinks

Display #

Page 1 of 2

1. [Templates](#)
(Category)

Templates give your site its look and feel. They determine layout, colors, type faces, graphics and other aspects of design that make your site unique. Your installation of **Joomla** comes prepackaged with ...

Created on

Figure 3: Search result page

The user can configure search settings (all keywords, any keywords, exact phrase) and change the order in which the results are displayed. The search can also be limited to different content items like articles and categories.

Behind the scenes

You are able to configure the search in the existing search plug-ins. Have a look at *Extensions - Plug-in Manager* and filter for type *search* (*Figure 4*).

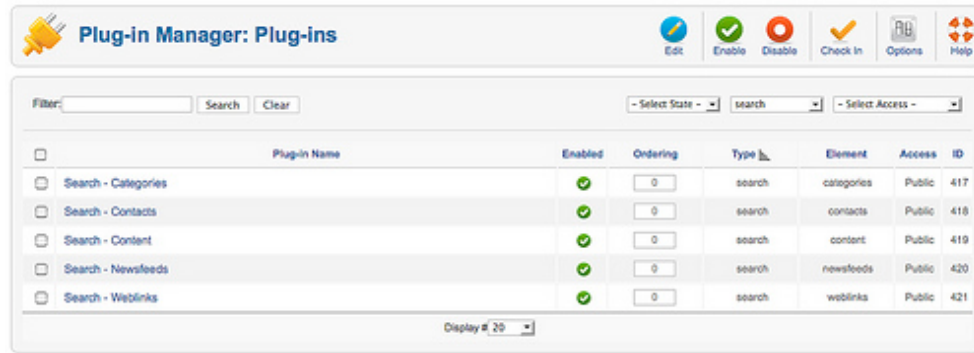


Figure 4: Search Plug-ins

For every *search only* checkbox in the search form there is a plug-in. You can change the order of the plug-ins, activate or deactivate them. You can also configure several options for every plug-in, e.g., whether it should search in archived articles or not.

Each additionally installed extension may contain a search plug-in and integrate itself into the search process.

With this plug-in-based search structure, Joomla!'s search component is easy to use and easy to extend!

WEBLINKS

With the web links component, you can create a link list or a download section that you can integrate into your website. To do so, Joomla! provides the nested categories system and counts the individual hits on the links. This component is useful for link catalogs. Add as many web link categories as you need, create as many web links as you have, then connect both by assigning categories. Add a menu link, choose a layout and configure the options.

The web links component provides three menu item type layouts: *List All Web Link Categories*, *List Web Links in a Category* and *Submit a Web Link*. We have already seen the first two layouts in articles and categories. By using the third one, you can involve your users in the creation of a joint catalog. Create a menu item 'Submit a Web Link' in the user menu and set the permissions in *Components* → *Web Links* → *Options* to allow registered users to create links. The *Options* area provides six tabs full of configurable details.

The example data includes a link catalog (*Figure 1*).

Joomla! Specific Links

 Joomla! Home of Joomla!	4
 Joomla! - Forums Joomla! Forums	4
 OpenSourceMatters Home of OSM	12

Subcategories

[Other Resources](#)

Figure 1: Link catalog

In the module manager, you'll find a web links module, which shows links from a category on your website.

MASS MAIL USERS

Sometimes you want to send a message via email to all of your users. Sometimes you want to send that message only to a group of users or only to those having access to the backend. Sending emails is always a bit delicate. Nobody wants to be a SPAMMER and nobody wants to receive SPAM, so be careful!

In order to use the mass mail user component, you have to configure Joomla! for sending emails in *Global Configuration* → *Server* → *Mail settings*. You may then configure the *Subject Prefix* and the *Mailbody Suffix* in *Users* → *Mass Mail Users: Options - Mass Mail*.

The user interface of the *Mass Mail Users* component is easy to understand. You can choose the user group of those users who should receive the email. You can determine whether the sub user groups should also receive emails, whether the email is in html format or plain text, and whether all recipients are listed in the email or marked as BCC (*Blind Carbon Copy*). The message has a subject line and a mail body. You can use html but no wysiwyg editor is provided (*Figure 1*).

Figure 1: Mass mail form

Storing mass mails in Joomla! is not possible. After filling in the form, click the send email icon. Now the emails are being sent.

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Chapter 15

Modules

A module is a content element that can be positioned next to an article. A menu, for example, is a module. The small registration block on the left side is also a module. You can create as many modules with smart functions as you need and position them on the predefined area in the template.

Modules are design elements in every template. Most of the time the search and the breadcrumb module have predefined positions in a template. This is also true for the navigation module in the header area, often called "top" position.

SIMILARITIES OF ALL MODULES

Every module has

- a **title** which can be displayed as a headline or hidden,
- a **position** in a template,
- a switch to **publish** the module,
- an **ordering index** for sorting modules at the same position, usually used in sidebars,
- a **scheduling feature** with a start and end date,
- the option to assign a **language** to it. Will only appear when the user selects this language
(Read more: [Multi-Language Websites](#))
- the option to add a **note** to the module
- the same **menu assignment** system as in templates. You can limit the appearance of the module.

ADVANCED OPTIONS

In Advanced Options, you can

- choose from different template layouts if the template offers this feature.
- add a module class suffix, which adds a text to the CSS class of the module. This is useful for individual styling.
- use the cache system by switching it on or off and set a time before the module is re-cached

CORE MODULES

The Joomla! 1.6 package contains 23 different module types. I will list and shortly describe them in alphabetical order.

(The descriptions are partly taken from the Joomla! help).

- We already used the **Archived Articles** module in the chapter [Statuses, Trash and Check-Ins](#), which offers a list of months and is linked to the archived articles.
- **Articles Categories** displays a list of categories from one parent category.
- **Articles Category** displays a list of articles from one or more categories.
- **Articles - Newsflash** will display a fixed number of articles from a specific category or a set of categories. You can configure ordering, number of articles, read more link and many more
- The **Articles - Related Articles** module displays other articles that are related to the one currently being viewed. These relations are established by the Meta Keywords.
All the keywords of the current article are compared with all the keywords of all other published articles. For example, you may have an article on "Breeding Parrots" and another on "Hand Raising Black Cockatoos". If you include the keyword "parrot" in both articles, then the *Related Items Module* will list the "Breeding Parrots" article when viewing "Hand Raising Black Cockatoos" and vice versa.
- The **Banners** module displays the active banner, which we already used in [chapter Banners](#)
- The **Breadcrumbs** module display the navigation breadcrumbs, which were used in chapter [Navigation](#).
- The **Custom HTML** module allows you to write your own HTML code and displays it in an appropriate module position. In *Basic Options* this module, has the usefull *Prepare Content* feature. Joomla! offers the possibility to apply additional functions to article content, like email cloaking, via the plug-in mechanism ([Read more: Plug-Ins](#)). If you turn on the *Prepare Content*, the HTML content you added to the module will be treated as any article content.
- The **Feed display** module enables the display of a syndicated feed. We used it in [chapter Newsfeeds](#).
- The **Footer** module shows the Joomla! copyright information. You are allowed to deactivate it but your are also invited to keep at on your website!
- The **Language Switcher** module is new in Joomla! 1.6 - It displays a list of available content languages for switching between them. Read more about this feature in the chapter Multi-Language Websites.
- The **Latest News** module shows a list of the most recently published articles. Filtering options are: by category, author and featured articles.
- The **Latest Users** module displays the latest registered users. You can link to the user profile, limit the amount of users and you may choose between different types of user information to be shown.
- The **Login module** displays a username and password login form. It also displays a link to retrieve a forgotten password. If user registration is enabled (*User Manager* → *Options*), another link will be shown to enable self-registration for users. It is possible, for example, to add

additional text to the form, to redirect your user after login and logout, and to encrypt the login form using SSL, which has to be provided by the web server.

- The **Menu** module is a container, which displays menu items of an existing menu. A menu can consist of nested menu items. You can filter these items by the start and end level, e.g., all the links from the second and third level. It is also possible to decide whether the sub menu item should be shown or not.
- The **Most Read Content** module shows a list of the currently published articles, which have the highest number of page views. You can filter by category and limit the number of articles.
- The **Random Image** module displays a random image from your chosen directory. Usually, you will use the media manager to store these images. You can configure the file type of the image, a URL to redirect to if the image is clicked upon and you can adjust the width and the height of the images. However, be careful with the last option. Joomla! does not resize the original image; it only sets attributes in the *img* tag.
- The **Search** module displays a search box. You may configure the design of the box, the position and the text of the button. We already covered the search module in [chapter Search](#).
- The **Statistics** module shows information about your server installation together with statistics on the website users, number of articles in your database and the number of web links you provide.
- The **Syndication Feeds** module creates a syndicated feed for the page where the module is displayed. It displays the icon. You can enter a text to be displayed near the icon and choose the feed format (RSS 2.0, Atom 1.0).
- The **Weblinks** module displays weblinks from a category defined in the Weblinks component ([Read more in chapter Weblinks](#)).
- The **Who's Online** module displays the number of anonymous users (e.g. guests) and registered users (ones logged in) that are currently accessing the website.
- The **Wrapper** module shows an iFrame window at a specified location. You configure the URL where the external website is located, switch scroll bars on and off, define the width and the height and give the iFrame a target name.

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“We love the power and flexibility that CBSubs gives us for managing users' profiles. The learning curve on our first project was time well spent as we are now doing things with Joomla that we didn't think were possible. That's why we are now working on our 10th CBSubs project!”

Joe Palmer



Chapter 16

Plug-Ins

A plug-in adds specific capabilities to a component. The term plug-in is also used in other places. For example, plug-ins are commonly used in web browsers to play videos. A well-known plug-in example is Adobe's Flash Player. A good example for the use of plug-ins in Joomla! is the [Search component](#). Five search plug-ins work together to find content from different Joomla! components.

Joomla! has eight plug-in types: *authentication*, *content*, *editors-xtd*, *editors*, *extension*, *search*, *system* and *user*. These are also the names of the website sub directories where the plug-in files are located. For example, plug-ins with a type of *authentication* are located in the website directory *plugins/authentication*. It is not possible and not necessary to create a plug-in in the administrator area like we have seen in the modules chapter. A plug-in has to be installed via the [Extension Management](#).

AUTHENTICATION

Authentication in Joomla! is the process of verifying whether a user should be permitted to do something on the site. Authorization, which is always the process that follows authentication, verifies that an authenticated user has permission to do something. You authenticate with your username and password, and you are authorized by being a member of a permission group. (read more: [Users and Permissions](#)). Joomla! offers three possibilities for authentication (*Figure 1*). Be careful with deactivating plug-ins. You must have at least one authentication plug-in enabled or you will lose all access to your site.

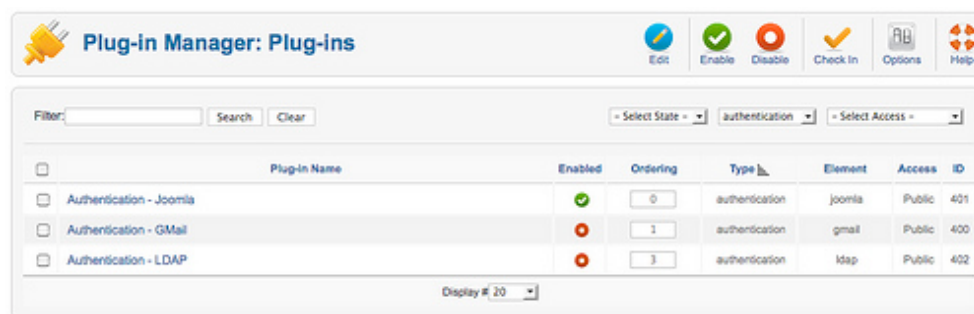


Figure 1: Authentication Plug-ins

Joomla!

The plug-in provides the standard behavior for Joomla!. You fill in the login form with your username and password and your login information is then verified.

GMail

If you activate the GMail plug-in, users will be able to log onto your site by using their GMail address and password. Prior registration is not necessary. With the first login, the *System plug-in Joomla!* will create a user account in its database. The GMail password is stored encrypted in the database, so your users GMail accounts cannot be hacked. This plug-in facilitates the login process for your users. Unfortunately, there is no advisory in the login form that logging in with GMail is possible. You'll have to add additional text or find another creative solution.

LDAP

The *Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP)*⁴⁵ is an application protocol for reading and editing data from directory service. It is used in companies for managing department affiliation as well as employee phone numbers.

```
dn: cn=John Doe,dc=example,dc=com
cn: John Doe
givenName: John
sn: Doe
telephoneNumber: +1 888 555 6789
telephoneNumber: +1 888 555 1232
mail: john@example.com
manager: cn=Barbara Doe,dc=example,dc=com
objectClass: inetOrgPerson
objectClass: organizationalPerson
objectClass: person
objectClass: top
```

In order to use this plug-in for authentication, you will need an LDAP Server (OpenLDAP) and you have to configure the LDAP plug-in with the server specific data. You will find a good tutorial at joomla.org: *LDAP from Scratch*⁴⁶.

CONTENT

Besides the *Joomla!* content plug-in, all other content plug-ins are related to the text you insert into an article. The Custom HTML can use the content plug-ins as well (*Figure 2*). (Read more: Modules)

⁴⁵ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ldap>

⁴⁶ <http://community.joomla.org/component/zine/article/507-developer-ldap-from-scratch-sam-moffatt.html>

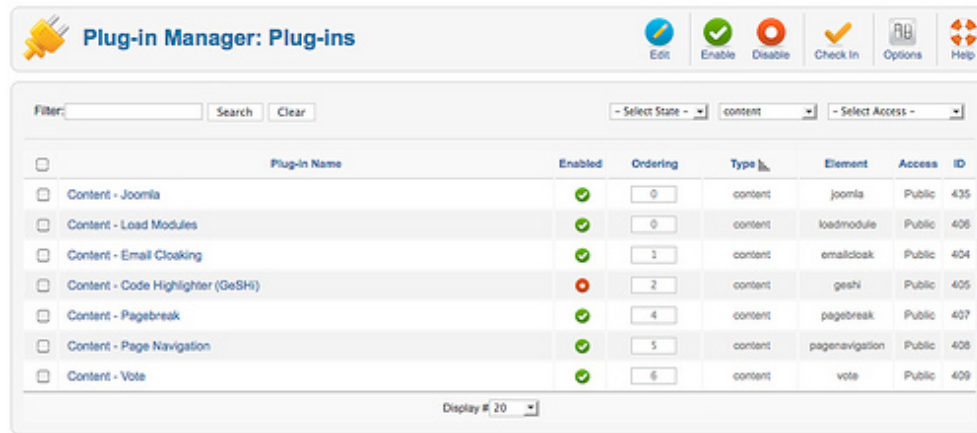


Figure 2: Content Plug-ins

Joomla

The Joomla plug-in has two tasks:

1. When you attempt to delete a category, it verifies whether the category is 'empty'. Empty means, no article or sub category is assigned to it. You can turn this feature off in *Basic Settings*.
2. If a new article is submitted via the frontend, the plug-in will send an email to all those users for whom *Send Email* is turned on (*User Manager - Edit User*). This feature can be turned off in *Basic Settings*.

Loading Modules

This plug-in loads the HTML output of all modules assigned to a template module position into an article. All you have to do is write `{loadposition position-14}` in the space where the modules should displayed. This feature is especially useful for putting banner ads into the content.

Email Cloaking

This plug-in transforms an email address entered into the content in the form of name@example.com into a link, and cloaks the email address by means of JavaScript. The advantage of this is that email address collection programs can't read your email address very easily.

Code Highlighter

The GeSHi plug-in makes *Syntax Highlighting* possible and creates an impressive listing on your website if you embed the code to be formatted within `<pre> </pre>` HTML tags:

```
<pre>
if ($number > 0)
{
    echo $number;
}
else{
    $number++;
}
```

```
}
</pre>
```

Pagebreak

The Pagebreak plug-in takes care of pagebreaks in articles. Just like the *Image* plug-in, it is easy to integrate into the content. Besides a simple pagebreak, various headers and page titles can also be defined. You can set pagebreaks using the pagebreak dialog. The page break will be displayed in the text window as a simple horizontal line. In the HTML code, the pagebreak looks like this:

```
<hr title="Page Title" alt="Table of Contents Alias" class="system-
pagebreak" />
```

This plug-in integrates the *Next* and *Previous* functions under the articles.

Page Navigation

This plug-in integrates the *Next* and *Previous* functions under the articles.

Vote

This plug-in adds voting functionality to articles.

EDITORS-XTD

The four editors-xtd plug-ins generate the buttons below the editor window (*Figure 3*).

<input type="checkbox"/>	Plug-in Name	Enabled	Ordering	Type	Element	Access	ID
<input type="checkbox"/>	Button - Article	✓	1	editors-xtd	article	Public	413
<input type="checkbox"/>	Button - Image	✓	2	editors-xtd	image	Public	414
<input type="checkbox"/>	Button - Pagebreak	✓	3	editors-xtd	pagebreak	Public	415
<input type="checkbox"/>	Button - Readmore	✓	4	editors-xtd	readmore	Public	416

Figure 3: Editor-xtd Plug-ins

Article

Displays a button for linking the actual article to other existing articles. After clicking the button, a pop-up will be displayed allowing you to choose the article to link to.

Image

This plug-in displays a button for inserting images into an article. After clicking the button, a pop-up will open allowing you to choose an image from the media directory or upload new files and configure its properties.

Pagebreak

Provides a button to enable a pagebreak to be inserted into an article. A pop-up allows you to configure the settings to be used. The plug-in has to be activated together with the *Content - Pagebreak* plug-in.

Readmore

Enables a button which allows you to easily insert the *Read more* link into an article.

EDITORS

Joomla! core comes with two editors (*Figure 4*). In *Global Configuration - Site* you can set the default editor for your website. Additionally, you can assign a different editor to every user account (*User - Manager*).

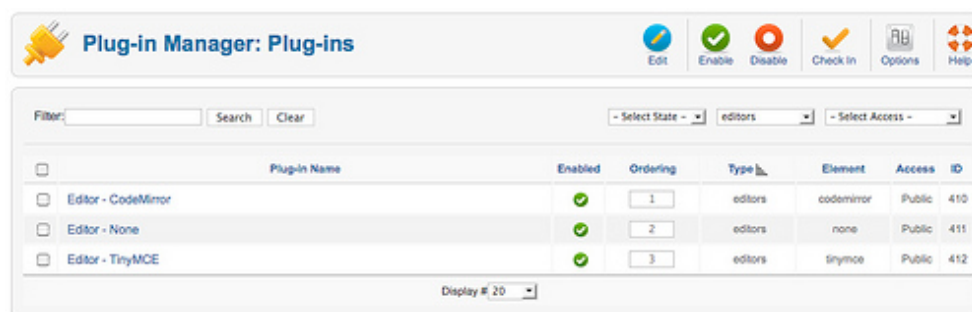


Figure 4: Editor Plug-ins

CodeMirror

CodeMirror⁴⁷ is a JavaScript library that can be used to create a relatively pleasant editor interface for code-like content — computer programs, HTML markup, and the like. This plug-in has to be activated if you want to offer textarea fields with the CodeMirror editor. You can configure the behavior of the editor in *Basic Settings*.

None

This plug-in has to be activated if you want to offer textarea fields without an editor.

TinyMCE

TinyMCE⁴⁸ is a platform-independent web-based Javascript HTML WYSIWYG editor control. It is the default editor in Joomla!.

EXTENSION

The extension plug-in type is related to tasks concerning the managing of Joomla! extensions.

Joomla

This plug-in manages the update sites for extensions.

⁴⁷ <http://codemirror.net/>

⁴⁸ <http://tinymce.moxiecode.com/>

SEARCH

The Search plug-ins for *Contents*, *Weblinks*, *Contacts*, *Categories*, and *Newsfeeds* can be activated when needed. They implement the search function of the Search component (*Read more in chapter [Search](#)*). These plug-ins have to be activated if you are trying to obtain search results from the respective sections. If you want to search additional components, the respective plug-ins for those have to be available as well (*Figure 5*).

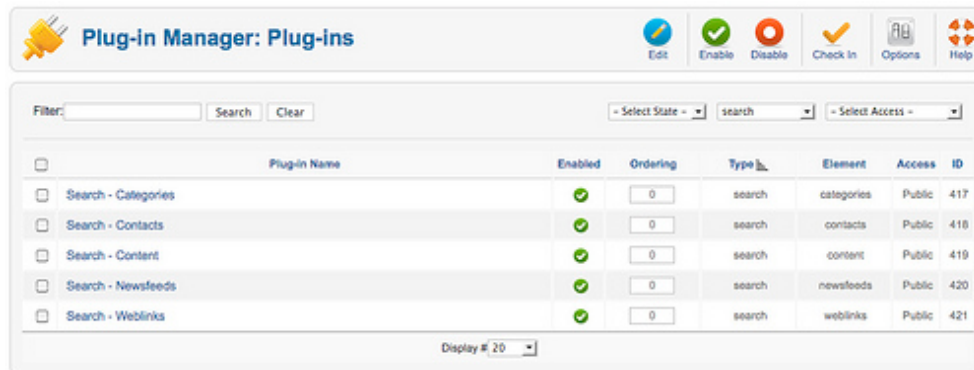


Figure 5: Search Plug-ins

SYSTEM

System plug-ins are deeply integrated in the Joomla! framework, and they usually affect the behavior of the entire website (*Figure 6*).

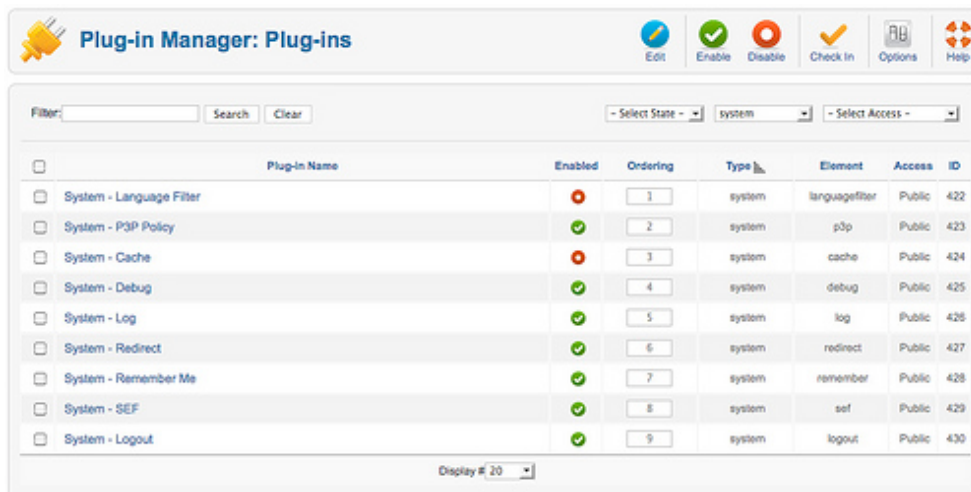


Figure 6: System Plug-ins

Language Filter

This plug-in filters the displayed content depending on the language desired. It has to be enabled only when the *Language Switcher* module is published (read more in chapter: [Modules](#))

P3P Policy

The *Platform for Privacy Preferences Project (P3P)*⁴⁹, is a protocol allowing websites to declare their intended use of information they collect about browsing users. The system P3P policy plug-in allows Joomla! to send a customized string of P3P policy tags in the HTTP header. This is needed for the sessions to work properly with certain browsers, i.e. Internet Explorer 6 and 7.

Cache

This module provides page caching. You can configure whether you would like to use the client's browser for caching pages.

Debug

This makes the debug function available, which is very important to programmers. You can configure the parameters to determine which information to display.

Log

This plug-in makes the system log files available.

You can determine the location of the log file in *Global Configuration - System - System Settings*.

This is an example of such a log file (*/logs/error.php*):

```
#Version: 1.0
#Date: 2011-07-06 12:39:38
#Fields: date      time      level      c-ip      status      comment
#Software: Joomla! 1.7.0 RC1 [ Ember ] 28-Jun-2011 23:00 GMT
2011-07-06 12:39:38 - 92.143.161.32 Joomla FAILURE: Empty password not
allowed
```

Redirect

Provides the redirect feature in conjunction with the Redirects component.

Remember Me

This is a method for saving access data locally in a cookie in the client browser. Once a user visits your website again, the data is already in the form. This storage is only enabled by explicitly marking a checkbox below the login form.

SEF

SEF is the acronym for *Search Engine Friendly*. This plug-in creates search engine friendly URLs for content elements, which can be configured in *Global Configuration - SEO Settings*.

Logout

The system logout plug-in enables Joomla! to redirect the user to the home page if he chooses to logout while being on a protected access page.

USER

User plug-ins are related to user specific functions (*Figure 7*).

⁴⁹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P3p>

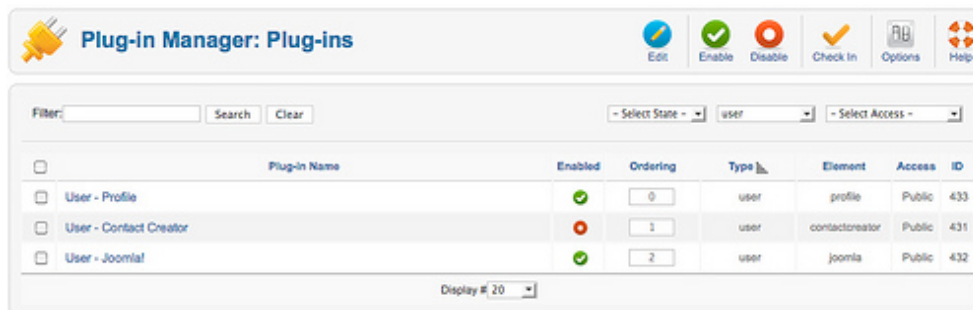


Figure 7: User Plug-ins

Profile

The user profile plug-in gives you the opportunity to ask the user for additional profile fields, which can be configured in *Basic Settings*. It can also be combined with the contact creator plug-in to automatically create a contact item for every user (*also see chapter [Users and Permissions](#)*).

Contact Creator

A plug-in to automatically create contact information for new users. It works in conjunction with the profile plug-in (*also see chapter [Users and Permissions](#)*).

Joomla!

This plug-in creates a user in the database after the first successful authentication.

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Chapter 17

Working with Templates

To be able to work with templates, you will not only need good design skills but also have an understanding of HTML and CSS. Some browsers, unfortunately, will not display the latest versions, which is why other versions are still quite common.

The next challenge is the neverending discussion between developers and designers about 'how to do things the right way'. Designers depend on developers because they need HTML markup with a possibility to add CSS classes. Developers also depend on designers because without a well-designed template the best component will be difficult to use.

Joomla! has built-in solutions for both challenges!

The Beez Template also exists as an XHTML and a HTML5 version and the suitable HTML markup and CSS classes are created with so-called *Overrides*. *Overrides* means that a designer can override the HTML output the developer's extension produces, without changing the original source code.

Another important agent in the template industry is 'Joe Webmaster'. Often, he only wants to change the header graphic, the colors, the width and a few other options.

Joomla! again has the perfect solution for doing this and it is called *Template Style*. *Template Style* means that you can create any number of copies of an existing *Template Style* to configure your own set of options and assign it to all or various menu items. Have a look back at the chapter [Templates](#) and come back for a deeper insight.

CREATE YOUR OWN STYLE

In the chapter about [Multi-Language Websites](#), we built a website based on the *Beez2* template. Now I would like to create my own style and change a few options in *Extensions - Template Manager - Beez2 default*. These changes are as follows:

- *Style name*: Beez2 - cocoate
- *Logo*: I do not want a logo, so I click the *Clear* Button
- *Site Title*: Joomla!
- *Site Description*: cocoate - consulting, coaching, teaching
- *Template color*: Nature

I save the style as a copy by clicking the *Save as Copy* icon (*Figure 1*).

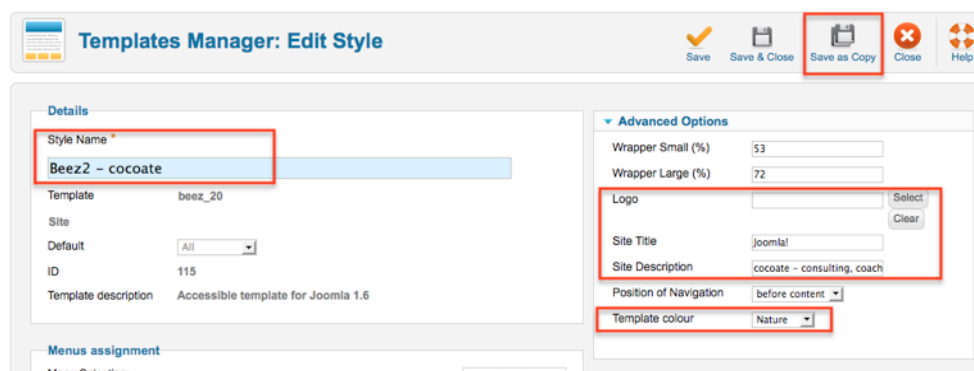


Figure 1: Individual template style

My website now has a totally different look (Figure 2). It is possible to create different styles for different parts of the website using the menu assignment feature.

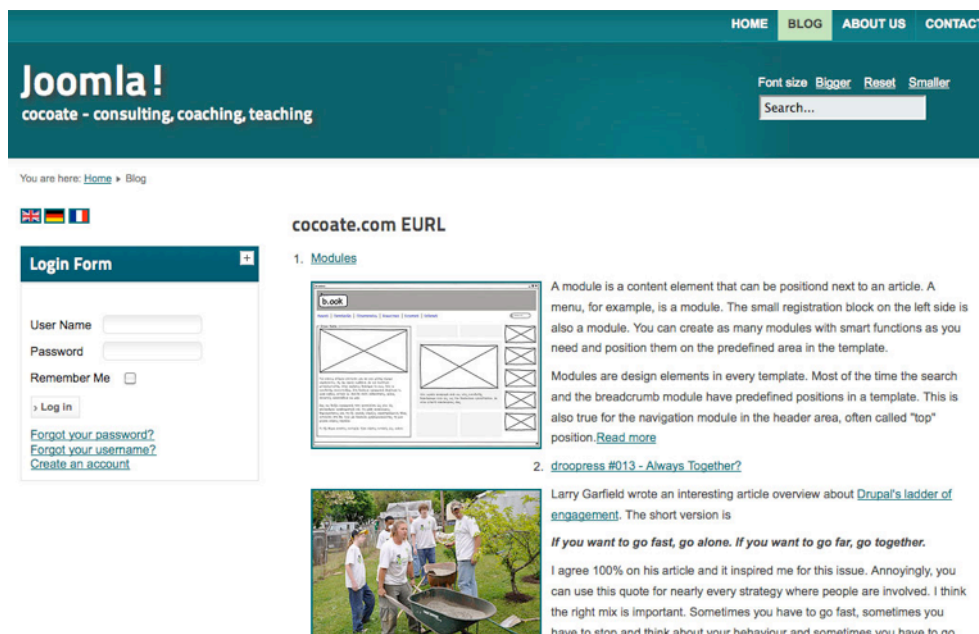


Figure 2: Website with Beez2 style

Creating different styles with available options is the easiest solution and often the best and fastest. When a Joomla! update becomes available, your individual styles will still be accessible in the new version. You are still working with the core package of Joomla! 1.7 without any additional extensions!

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CUSTOMIZING EXISTING TEMPLATES

If you are reading this chapter, I assume you have already created a *template style*, figured out how to work with all of the available template options, but would still like to have more possibilities. Welcome to the world of HTML and CSS! I'll also assume that you know these two abbreviations. If not, have a look at wikipedia for HyperText Markup Language (HTML)⁵⁰ and Cascading Styles Sheets (CSS)⁵¹.

In Joomla! it is possible to edit all CSS used by the template within the Joomla! template manager. Go to *Extensions - Template Manager - Templates* and click on the link *beez_20 Details*. There, you will be able to make changes in the *beez2* template as well as access all modifiable files (*Figure 3*).

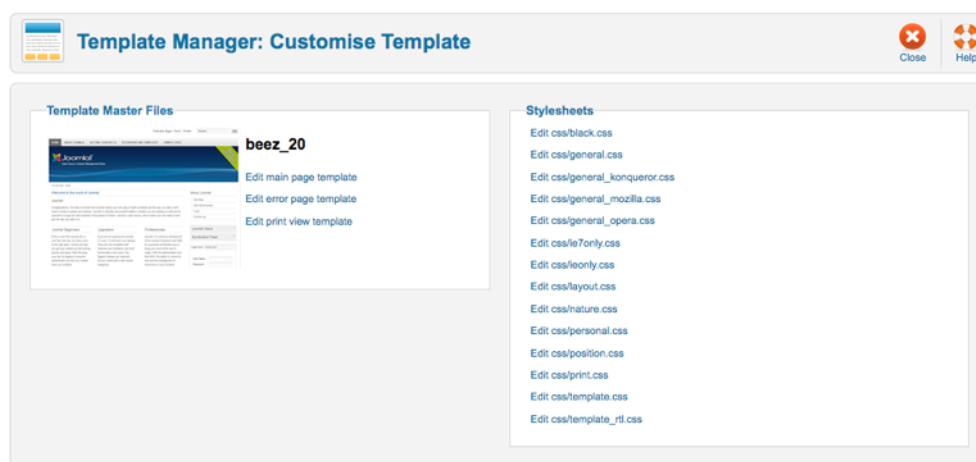


Figure 3: Beez2: Customize Template

The editable CCS files are the files that are located in the file system in the folder *htdocs/templates/[template_name]/css*. Click on the linked name of the CSS file and a form will open, in which you can edit the file content by using the *CodeMirror* editor. Besides the CSS files, you can also edit the three main template files:

- **Main page**

htdocs/templates/[template_name]/index.php

- **Error page**

If an error occurs while opening a Joomla! site, this template is used for the page.

htdocs/templates/[template_name]/error.php

⁵⁰ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Html>

⁵¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CSS>

- **Print view**

This template is responsible for the output when you access the print view.

`htdocs/templates/[template_name]/component.php`

More template pieces like the files for the *core overrides* are located in `htdocs/templates/[template_name]/html`. The *core overrides* cannot be edited from the administrator backend.

The changes you make here will change the core *Beez2* files. This is something to keep in mind in case of updates.

OVERRIDES

You have already created a style, changed the CSS files and the main page of your template and you are still unhappy with the result? :-) Then this is the perfect time to discuss overrides. In Joomla! there are two kinds of overrides: *template overrides* and *alternative layouts*.

TEMPLATE OVERRIDES

Let's assume you want to change the layout of the search result page. A component like the search component has a default template layout, which is stored in the file `/htdocs/components/com_search/views/search/tmpl/default.php`. This file makes the search page look the way it looks. Add a few words to the file, save it and you will immediately see the result! For example, add

```
<strong>I have changed something :-)</strong>
```

in line 13 and see what happens (*Figure 4*).

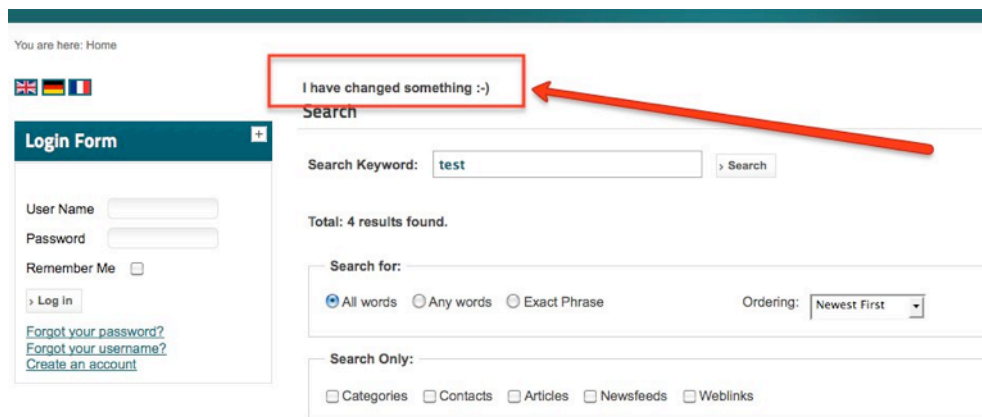


Figure 4: Changes in the HTML output

The result is good for your motivation because it was so easy and is displayed in every template. However, **it is not good for your reputation because you have just changed core code**. With the next Joomla! update, your changes will be gone!

A better alternative would be to use *template overrides* in each template. Copy the changed file to your template folder to `/htdocs/templates/[template_name]/html/com_search/search/default.php` and remove the changes in the original file. The result on the webpage is the same but, behind the

scenes, you have overridden the original `.../default.php` file with your desired content layout - without changing core code - well done!

This system was introduced in the year of 2007 with the release of Joomla! 1.5 and still works very well today.

ALTERNATIVE LAYOUTS

In Joomla! 1.6 the overrides have an enhancement called *alternative layouts*. I am sure you have already seen the *Alternative Layout* field in the edit form of articles, modules and categories (*Figure 5*).

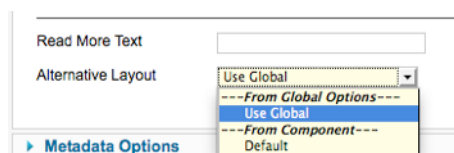


Figure 5: Alternative layout in an article

Why do we need alternative layouts? Imagine, you are an administrator or webmaster and a template comes with three alternative layouts for an article. Sometimes it is a 'normal article', sometimes it should look like a product, and sometimes like a book page. You only have to choose which layout you would like to use. That sounds like a great feature and, of course, it is.

The technique is the same as with template overrides. You have to create a folder with the same name as the component or module and a subfolder for the view. There are two differences:

1. Obviously the file name has to be something other than *default.php* as this one has already been reserved for template overrides.
2. The alternative layout is, of course, not automatically selected.

Additionally to the alternative layout, menu item types can be added to the layout and the option items of that article can be controlled by defining them in an xml file with the same name as the alternative layout file (*Figure 6*).



Figure 6: Additional menu item types

The creation of these files are no beginner's topic but I am sure third-party templates will soon make use of these new possibilities (*Figure 7*).

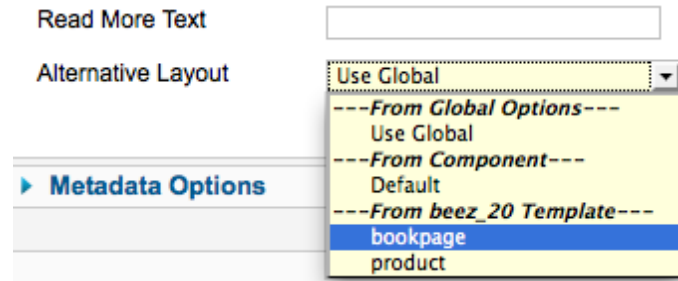


Figure 7: Additional layouts in an article

CREATE A NEW TEMPLATE USING ATOMIC

The Atomic template is a skeleton for your own template. It consists of:

- `/htdocs/templates/atomic`
 - `component.php` - the print view template
 - `error.php` - the error page template
 - `favicon.ico` - the website icon (*Favicon* [5])
 - `index.html` - a security file displaying a blank page when the directory is entered directly (also has to be configured by the webserver but usually is)
 - `index.php` - the template main page
 - `templateDetails.xml` - The configuration file containing all information about files, options and positions is necessary to show the template in the template manager and to later create an installable zip package.
 - `template_preview.png` - the template preview image, displayed in template manager
 - `template_thumbnail.png` - the template thumbnail image, displayed in template manager
- `/htdocs/templates/atomic/css`
 - the folder for CSS files
- `/htdocs/templates/atomic/html`
 - the folder for *Override* files - Atomic provides a few *Overrides* for modules.
- `/htdocs/templates/atomic/images`
 - the folder for images
- `/htdocs/templates/atomic/js`
 - the folder for Java script files
- `/htdocs/templates/atomic/languages`
 - the folder for language files - Atomic comes with English base language files.

Main template file index.php

The file name of this layout file has to be `index.php` since Joomla! searches for embedded `<jdoc>` and PHP commands. All necessary HTML markup is already built-in and commented. You can change the content of the file according to your needs.

To get an idea, let's do a quick walkthrough:

In *line 24* you can choose whether you want to use the blueprint CSS framework or not.

In *line 50, 56, 62* and more you see that the template provides positions with special names (*atomic-search, atomic-topmenu, ...*). If you want to use these names you have to assign your modules to these positions. If you want to change the names, you may do that in the *templatedetails.xml* file.

In *line 48* you will see:

```
echo $this->baseurl ?>/templates/<?php echo $this->template ?>/js/template.js
```

Joomla! knows the values in *baseurl* as well as the name of your template and you can access them when needed.

In *line 48* you will see:

```
echo $app->getCfg('sitename');
```

It will tell you the name of your site.

In *line 50* you will see:

```
if($this->countModules('atomic-search')) ...
```

It counts the amount of modules at the position *atomic-search*. It is used to adjust your layout to different situations.

In *line 52* you will see:

```
<jdoc:include type="modules" name="atomic-search" style="none" />
```

This is a `<jdoc>` command, which only exists as a name space in Joomla!. It is used to insert the HTML output of the given type into the attributes. In this case it means the output of all modules assigned to the template position *atomic search*. The style attribute is called *module chrome* and can have these values

- **table** - The output is displayed in a table.
- **horz** - The output is displayed horizontally in a cell of a surrounding table.
- **xhtml** - The output is in in an XHTML-compliant `<div>` element.
- **rounded** - The output is in a format in which round corners can be displayed. The class of the element is renamed from *moduletable* to *module*.
- **none** - no formatting
- **outline** - the display type for the position preview (*?tp=1*)
- **Template specific style** - Some templates, like Beez, have their own styles. See chapter [Angie Radtke About Her Beez Template](#).

You will find a complete list of styles in the Joomla! documentation - *What is module chrome* [6].

Other `<jdoc>` types are:

```
<jdoc:include type="head" />
<jdoc:include type="message" />
<jdoc:include type="component" style="none" />
```

Every page needs a *head*, sometimes a *message* (after saving) and, of course, a *component*. One *component* can be displayed per page. The *component* can make use of the module chrome as well. The *error* and the *print view* template files work exactly like the *main* template file.

CSS Folder

You will find three files in this folder.

1. The `css/template.css` file with predefined commented CSS commands. If you don't use the blueprint framework, you have to uncomment a few of them. The lines are specifically marked.
2. The file `css/template_ie.css` is empty. Here you can add style overrides for Internet Explorer.
3. The file `css/template_rtl.css` is empty as well. You can add style overrides for right to left languages.

Blueprint framework

Blueprint is a CSS framework designed to reduce development time and ensure cross-browser compatibility.

A few sentences taken from the *readme* file:

Welcome to Blueprint! This is a CSS framework designed to cut down on your CSS development time. It gives you a solid foundation to build your own CSS commands. Here are some of the out-of-the-box features BP provides:

- * An easily customizable grid
- * Sensible default typography
- * A typographic baseline
- * Perfected browser CSS reset
- * A stylesheet for printing
- * Powerful scripts for customization
- * Absolutely no bloat!

You will find demos and tutorials on the project website - <http://www.blueprintcss.org/>.

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Chapter 18

Angie Radtke

The Beez Template

A template usually contains more than you see at first sight.

The term template is usually connected with the visual appearance of a website. But in addition to the design, it is distinguished by the way of the technical implementation. It determines where the content is located within the flow of documents, when and where certain modules can be switched on and disappear, whether custom error pages are used and what markup - version of HTML should be used.

Some users will certainly be familiar with the Beez template in Joomla! 1.5. Both, *beez_20* and *beez5* are visually very different from the design of the previous version. For the design I used a neutral grey for the elementary components of the template, such as the menu to provide a solution that harmonizes with many colours.

Even at that time, I wanted to develop a standard compliant, easily accessible and adaptable template. I consciously had chosen the colour purple, in the hope that many designers would take the code, modify it and make it freely available. I had hoped for a variety of many new free templates. This has unfortunately not occurred.

Another mistake was probably that I did not communicate clearly enough what the real aim was. The output was structured in a way so that almost any design could be implement in a simple and straightforward manner, with only slight modifications in the CSS. I kept this principle in the new versions of Beez. Additionally, there is a more accessible JavaScript and in *beez5* a small portion of HTML5⁵². *Beez_20* does not require template overrides. Layout tables are finally not in use anymore in Joomla!. The new HTML-based output follows the structure of the old Beez template.

The CSS class names have been renamed and unified for a better understanding. This is a tremendous advantage for template designers. The HTML output from the Joomla! Standard is clean and well-formed. You do not need to use template overrides anymore to generate clean, standard-compliant code. The technical capabilities of both Beez templates are almost identical. They differ only in their graphic design. The *Beez5* version is also designed for the use of HTML5.

- Accessibility
- Configurable position of the navigation

⁵² <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML5>

- WAI-ARIA Roles Landmark
- Automatic representation of the modules in accessible tabs
- Fade in and out of collapsible modules
- Fade in and out of collapsible column
- In *beez_20* you can choose between two forms: natural or human
- In *beez_5* HTML5 is usable

GENERAL ACCESSIBILITY

For most people the Internet has become the norm. Information from around the world are ready for retrieval and perhaps, more importantly, also the special offers at the local hardware store, the opening times of the registration office or the phone book are available on your home screen. Annoying phone calls or library visits are unnecessary, you just look on the net.

But not everybody benefits from this development. Those people, with any physical or mental disability have difficulties to participate fully in society, even though they could benefit enormously from communications technology. But they often fail because of barriers that obstruct their access to information or make it even impossible. Many of these barriers can be overcome, if the offers are designed accordingly.

Operators of online shops or banks which provide Internet banking, should be aware of that not so small target group.

Accessible web design aims at making content and interactions on the Internet accessible for all user groups and devices, if possible.

Approx. 8% of the German population have a physical limitation that makes it difficult for them to access information from the Internet. Commonly the term “accessibility” in web design is identified with Internet for blind people. I want to emphasize that this is not all - indeed, this is only the smallest part. I've often wondered why this is so. Probably the reason is that the monitor has become the classic symbol for the computer, and someone who sees nothing, cannot use it. In my daily work, I have noticed that even blind people cope much better than people with other types of disabilities.

Blind are people whose residual vision is only a few percent of the average value. The number of blind people in Germany lies between 150,000 to 200,000. Some of them can decipher just texts through the computer font size and customized colour settings, while others depend on acoustic information or read by touching the Braille display.

Significantly greater is the proportion of people with severe visual impairment.

About a quarter of the population in working age complains of various degrees of ametropia. Later on, the percentage is much higher. Some of these problems can be compensated by glasses quite well, others with limitations only. Certain eye diseases such as cataract or glaucoma can be resolved or at least mitigated through surgery. Some, like retinitis pigmentosa or diabetic retinopathy, lead to a steady deterioration of vision and ultimately often lead to complete loss of

vision. "In the so-called" tunnel vision, the visual field of the affected people is extremely limited - sometimes to the size of a two-Euro coin, which is held at arm length from the eyes.

About 10% of the male population is affected by mild forms of colour blindness – which usually means that some reds and greens cannot be distinguished from each other. Blind to other colours, complete colour blindness or red-green colour blindness in women are very rare.

One other potential group of users has problems with the usual input technology - not everyone can use a mouse or a standard keyboard.

There can be many reasons: arms and fingers are immobile or move spontaneously and are difficult to control. Others have even no arms and no hands or are paralyzed from the neck down after a stroke on one side. As long as a human being is capable to send a controlled binary signal - the famous 0 or 1 – he can learn to operate a computer and its functions with appropriate software.

There are about 60,000 to 100,000 people in Germany with extremely limited ability to hear. Several thousand of these were disabled in learning the German language so that they know it only imperfectly (at the level 4th to 6th grade). This makes the demand for more understandable texts clear.

To communicate with each other, but also for the reception of foreign or sophisticated content they prefer the German sign language - this is an idiom on its own, independent of the spoken language based on a system of signs and gestures.

Attention

Not only people with low hearing abilities surf the Internet without or with speakers turned off! It is not sufficient, for example, to give acoustic warning signals only - they must always be accompanied by a clearly interpretable visual notice.

The more the Internet conquered all areas of life, the more situational disabilities are visible: slow connections in the hotel, uncontrollable lighting conditions in the moving train, arranged waiver of sound in the workplace.

All people benefit from accessible websites. It is not about meeting all the rules to the fullest extent, which governmental institutions are required to comply to. Even small steps toward accessibility can significantly improve the usability of a website.

Due to its high penetration, Joomla! has the ability to influence a lot. With the standard template beez it is now relatively easy, to create websites which are accessible and usable for many.

As in beez 1.5 all those things that are necessary for the design of accessible templates are implemented also in beez_20 and beez5. The most important are:

- Separation of content and layout
- Semantically logical structure
- Anchors links

- Keyboard navigability
- Sufficient colour contrasts

Separation of Content and Layout

The first and most important rule for developers is the possible complete separation of content and layout:

- Clean and pure HTML for the content
- No unnecessary layout tables
- Formatting exclusively with CSS
- A logical semantic structure
- Anchor links

The linearisable issue of content and formatting via CSS only is one of the most important conditions for convenient accessibility.

Only then assistive technology has the option to recycle the contents at will, while the visual presentation can be completely ignored. The outsourcing of the presentation in style sheets give, for example, visually impaired users, the possibility to define own style sheets in their browser and adapt that the pages exactly fit his/her needs. A linear presentation of content and an adequate semantic structure is particularly important for users of screen readers.

Screen readers grasp the content of a site from top to bottom, that means linear. The use of extensive layout tables hinders linearisation.

Behind the term Semantic Web probably most of the people can imagine only very little. You probably associate language lessons, but it also plays a special role in writing Web content. For example, screen readers offer their users to jump from heading to heading or from list to list, to get a quick overview of the overall document. If a Web document has no headers, this functionality is not available.

The formal structure of a web document should largely correspond to the content structure. Depending on the Web project the choice of the corresponding heading hierarchy can be quite a challenge.

Today, this concept can be found not only in the templates, but in the entire Joomla! Standard output. In the development of Joomla! 1.6, this was a central part of the development work. Reasons were, in addition to better usability in assistive technologies, also search engine optimization and better usability in mobile devices. Well-structured code not only helps people with disabilities better navigate within a site, even Google feels better with such a well-structured site.

Anchor Links

Linear presentation of content has a big drawback: You may have to travel a very long way, in order to access *"in the back lying"* areas of content.

On the screen, a three-column layout allows that a number of areas begin “above” and the eye can jump right to it, where it, supported by visual aids, suspects interesting information.

Remedy offers the concept of anchors. It is, in fact, a non-visual counterpart to the graphical layout and allows the user of linear playback devices to identify key content areas at the beginning of the page and then immediately jump to the area where he/she believes the information of his/her interest lies.

Practically, the use of anchors means, to set up an additional menu at the top of each page for internal navigation of the page. In most cases it will be useful to hide this menu from the graphical layout. It's irritating for users, that can see, to click a link, but nothing (apparently) is happening, because the link target is already visible in the viewport.

In any case, the “*anchor links menu*” should be not too long and built in a very well thought-through manner, because it extends and complicates, due to the linearisation itself, the path of perception. In general, it's advisable to offer the main content as the first target jump, then regular visitors, who know the site and handle the navigation specifically, have the shortest way to where they actually want to go to.

At least here it becomes clear that, particularly websites with more complex content pages do not only need a graphical layout, but also a content design that aims to arrange the content in a form that it contains no unnecessary barriers for the users of linearising clients.

Example:

```
<ul class="skiplinks">
  <li><a href="#main" class="u2">Skip to content</a></li>
  <li><a href="#nav" class="u2">Jump to main navigation and login</a></li>
</ul>
```

The Colour Choice

The colour choice is, in the context of accessibility, of particular importance because even people with impaired colour vision should be able to use your website fully.

If you convert to a layout into shades of gray, you gain an approximate idea of what colour-blind people can see. However, the perception is very individual and depending on the severity of different degrees of ametropia. Many colour-blind people, however, have learned during their life, what colours are represented by what they see. They know, for example, that grass is green, and they can identify by comparison and other shades of green.

Much more widespread than the total colour blindness is the so-called red-green colour blindness. Affected by a genetic anomaly, people are not able to distinguish the colours red and green. Mixed colours that contain these colour components are blurred for them.

Contrasts

Colours also play an important role in various other types of visual impairment, not only because of the colour itself, but also a significant colour contrast can be helpful in the use of a web page.

Foreground and background colour within the text elements should form a distinct contrast, though it is not possible to select the colour and contrast settings, which can meet all requirements. Black text on white background achieves a maximum colour contrast. To avoid disturbing glare effects, a slight tinge of the background can be useful. Some visually impaired people will need very strong contrasts to separate the individual elements of content in a page from each other. For them, colour combinations such as white text on a bright, contrasting orange background are not rich enough. In contrast, other strong contrasts act as a radiation - the content is difficult to read.

BEEZ_20: DESIGN CHOICE

In the Beez 2.0-Template, you can choose between personal and nature design. The implementation of the files *nature.css* and *personal.css* via the template parameters as well as the structure of the used CSS files are the basis for this method.

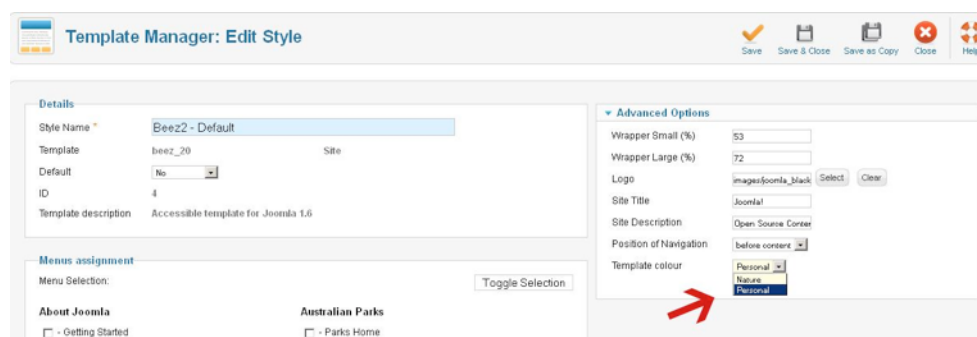


Figure 1: Choose the Style

There are two more files which are responsible for the colour scheme. The *position.css* and the *layout.css* are responsible for the overall positioning and spacing.

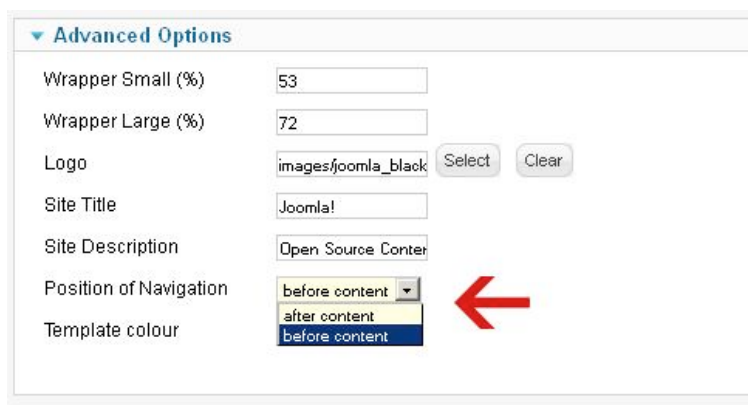
Would you like to change later only the colours of the template, you can simply modify the files *personal.css* or *nature.css* as desired. The positioning of the content remains the same, as they are defined in other files.

All style templates are still arbitrarily modifiable and can be amended by template developers to include additional templates.

In the design of the source code I have taken into account to offer the maximum possible creative variations by modifying the CSS files. I'm telling you that very, very quietly, but in their own way, the Beez templates are something like frameworks and save you a lot of working steps.

POSITION OF THE NAVIGATION

For aesthetic reasons or to improve the search engine friendliness and accessibility, it may be necessary to position the navigation before or after the content. Both versions of the Beez templates let you choose between two options in the backend.



The screenshot shows the 'Advanced Options' section of the Joomla! backend. It contains several form fields: 'Wrapper Small (%)' with value 53, 'Wrapper Large (%)' with value 72, 'Logo' with value 'images/joomla_black' and 'Select'/'Clear' buttons, 'Site Title' with value 'Joomla!', 'Site Description' with value 'Open Source Content Management', 'Position of Navigation' with a dropdown menu showing 'before content' (selected), 'after content', and 'before content', and 'Template colour' with value 'before content'. A red arrow points to the 'Position of Navigation' dropdown menu.

Figure 2: Select position of the navigation

The navigation is visually and semantically positioned before or after the content and formatted by use of CSS.

If you open the *index.php* of *beez_20* or the template you have already modified, you can find around line 27 the following assignment:

```
$navposition = $this->params->get('navposition');
```

The variable *\$navposition* is assigned to the currently selected value in the backend. The variable expels the value *left* or *center*. *Left* represents the position before the content, *center* stands for the positioning after the content.

The term *center* seems to be a little confusing here, it would be logically better to say it is *right*. But depending on how you design the CSS, you can place the navigation in three-column view in the middle.

JAVASCRIPT AND WAI ARIA

WAI-ARIA (Web Accessibility Initiative - Accessible Rich Internet Applications) is a technical specification of the Web Accessibility Initiative⁵³, which will facilitate the participation for people with disabilities in today's increasingly complex and interactive web services. This technique is particularly helpful in designing dynamic content presentations and user interfaces. The technique is based on the use of JavaScript, Ajax, HTML, and CSS.

Especially blind people often lose orientation when visiting a site where content is suddenly displayed or hidden. People, that can see, can sense this change with the eyes, blind people can understand it only when the focus is placed on the item.

⁵³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_Accessibility_Initiative

To focus means nothing else than to place the cursor in the appropriate place to make the positioned content accessible.

In HTML and XHTML we did not had the opportunity to focus on all elements. Only the interaction elements such as links, buttons or input fields were focusable. This has changed with the use of WAI ARIA and HTML5.

The used scripts within the Beez templates rely on this technique to make the template accessible to people with disabilities.

WAI ARIA - LANDMARK ROLES: FIRST AID FOR THE ORIENTATION

Landmark Roles are intended to facilitate the orientation on a website by describing page areas and their exact function within the page. The navigation has the role navigation, search has the role search, the main content has the role main. The implementation is quite simple. The element is extended only to the appropriate role attribute. Thus, users of modern screen readers will be informed of this role.

```
<div id="main" role="main">
```

Inside the Beez template, this is done automatically by using javascript (*javascript/hide.js*). The approval of the Wai-Aria technology is still pending and with the direct implementation into the source code the website would fail doing the validation test.

A complete overview of the landmark roles can be found at http://www.w3.org/TR/wai-aria/roles#landmark_roles.

If you later use the Beez template as the basis for your own template and modify the structure of page areas, you should adapt the script accordingly.

Collapsible modules and sidebars

The activation and deactivation of certain areas can be helpful for the user, especially on pages with a lot of content. Both Beez templates provide two different ways. First, the column with additional information can be fully switched on and off, on the other hand, the modules can be collapsed up to their headlines.

Hide Column

To test this functionality, you have to place a module in the column for additional information. The module positions *position-6*, *position-8* and *position-3* are available. No matter whether the navigation is before or after the content, whenever this column is displayed, a link appears right above with the text *"close info"*.

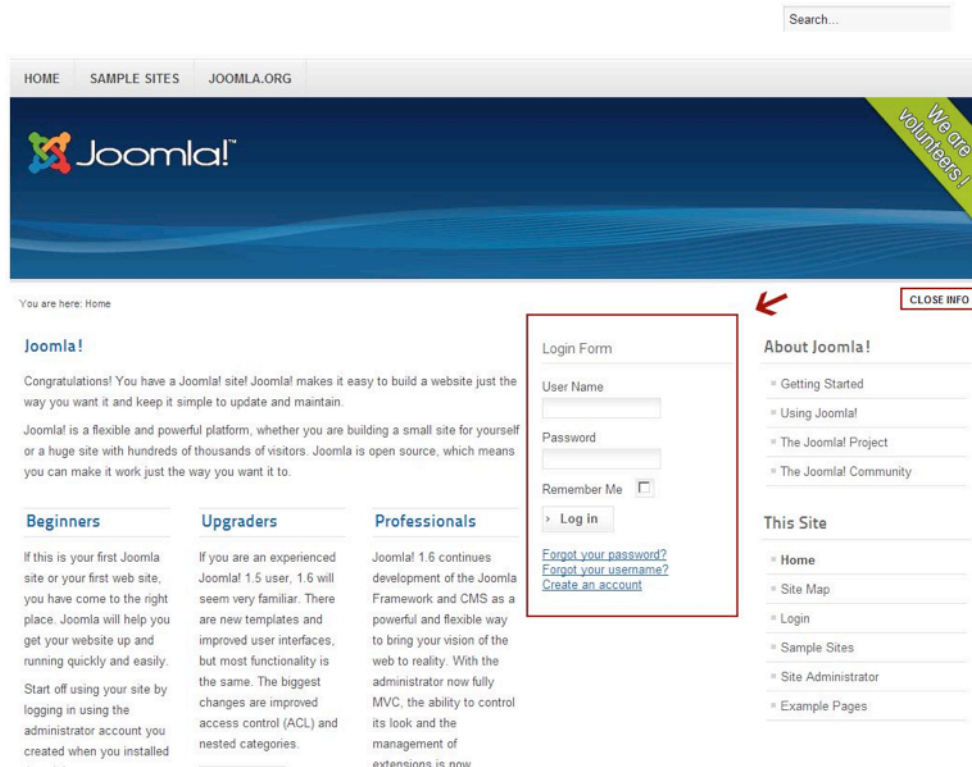


Figure 3: Hide Column

By activating this link, the column is hidden, the link text will change to "open info" and the column will be re-activated by clicking.

This functionality is controlled by JavaScript. All the scripts mentioned here are based on the supplied Mootools JavaScript framework that diminishes our work in many areas.

The file *hide.js* in the JavaScript folder of the template is responsible for showing and hiding the column.

In the *index.php* of the template, around line 194, you will find the necessary HTML code.

```
<div id="close">
  <a href="#" onclick="auf('right')">
    <span id="bild">
      <?php echo JText::_('TPL_BEEZ2_TEXTRIGHTCLOSE'); ?>
    </span>
  </a>
</div>
```

The textual contents of the JavaScript variables are controlled with the Joomla language strings.

Show and hide modules

One of the biggest challenges in designing a website is the clear structuring of the content. Especially on the homepage, you often need to place a variety of information without cluttering the page.



Figure 4: beez-Slider

Both Beez templates have the opportunity to present modules in the form of sliders.

Here, the first output is the title of the module. By clicking on the plus sign next to the heading, the module opens and its contents will be visible. Then, the plus sign is replaced by a minus sign and the module can be folded back. Even with this method I have used the WAI-ARIA technology.

In order to use modules as described, they should be integrated in the template by using the command.

```
<jdoc:include      type="modules"      name="position-8"      style="beezHide"
headerLevel="3" state="0" />
```

By using the *style = "beezHide"* all modules that are loaded at this position are shown as sliders.

You may have noticed that the command includes the attribute “state”, which controls whether the module is expanded or collapsed.

If you choose the value 0, it is closed when it first loads, select the value 1, it is opened by default and can be closed by the user.

Accessible Tabs

The presentation of content in so-called Tabs is becoming increasingly popular. There are already modules that Joomla! extends with this functionality. But none of the offered modules fulfilled the requirements of accessibility.



Figure 5: Beez Tabs

The integrated solution in Beez is based on the WAI-ARIA techniques to ensure accessibility. To represent the modules in tabs, they are integrated as follows.

```
<jdoc:include      type="modules"      name="position-5"      style="beezTabs"
headerLevel="2" id="1" />
```

All on the *position-5* placed modules are arranged automatically in the form of tabs. You control the HTML output via the Style *beezTabs*. The use of the attribute *id = "3"* is mandatory. The reason lies in the structure of the used JavaScripts. Imagine, you want to integrate modules at different places into your template. The JavaScript function requires a unique information about where which tabs should be opened and closed. If this information is missing, the script will not work as desired. Please use at this point numbers only for the id.

ADJUST FONT SIZE

In the top head of the layout the user is able to change the font size. The technical basis for this function can be found in the JavaScript file *templates/your_name/JavaScript/md_stylechanger.js*. Within the *index.php* you include a div container with *id="fontsize"*.

This area is initially empty and will then be filled dynamically with content using JavaScript. If your visitors should have turned off JavaScript, this function is not available.

Some might be asking, why this function is still necessary, as every browser has a feature to increase font size. Especially for older people this technique is often of particular importance, since most of them have a more or less impaired vision. However, particularly older people often know very little about the functionality of web browsers and look forward to an apparent offer.

BEEZ5: USE HTML5

The *Beez5* template is hardly different from *beez_20*, apart from some design aspects. The features offered are largely identical.

The only difference: *beez5* allows the use of HTML5. If you take a look at the template parameters of *beez5*, you see that you can choose between HTML5 and XHTML code output.

This is based on the HTML5 template overrides, which you find in the HTML folder of your template.

HTML5 provides a variety of new possibilities and will bring a number of changes and easements in the future, but it is still not yet an approved standard (March 2011). Many of the options offered are currently not reliably applicable, but others can already be used without difficulties.

A very important part, which already works, are the new structuring elements. HTML4 and XHTML had low semantic weight. This has improved significantly with HTML5.

We have now really practical elements to structure the page.

With the elements

- header
- footer
- aside
- nav

you can structure a wonderful page.

Elements such as

- section
- article
- hgroup

help you to assign more importance to the actual content.

The HTML5 code in *Beez5* uses only the elements that are reliable right now. Only the *Internet Explorer Version 8* has some problems, as always.

In the top of the page a script is inserted, which integrates the unknown elements in the existing document structure.

```
<!--[if lt IE 9]>
<script type="text/JavaScript" src="<?php echo $this->baseurl ?>/
templates/beez5/JavaScript/html5.js"></script>
<![endif]-->
```

Basis for the integration of HTML5 in Joomla! are the template overrides and the response to the selected markup language via the template parameter in the `index.php`. Because the template allows the use of two different markup languages, you have to approach this possibility in the *index.php*.

Clearly said: The construction of the *index.php* is quite complicated, because depending on the selected markup language another HTML code is generated.

It starts with defining the type of document.

When you open the *index.php* of *Beez5* templates, you can instantly see what I mean.

```
<?php if(!$templateparams->get('html5', 0)): ?>

<!DOCTYPE html PUBLIC "-//W3C//DTD XHTML 1.0 Transitional//EN" "http://
www.w3.org/TR/xhtml1/DTD/xhtml1-transitional.dtd"><?php else: ?>

<?php echo '<!DOCTYPE html>'; ?>

<?php endif; ?>
```

This concept is carried through the whole page and the HTML5 elements can only be issued if HTML5 was also selected in the backend.

If you later want to build your own template in HTML 5, it would be better you remove all the queries and XHTML elements and output directly the HTML 5 code.

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Chapter 19

Search Engine Optimization

Every website owner usually wants to be seen on the first search results page in search engines like Google and social networks like Facebook. Unfortunately, there is not enough space on the first search results page for all the websites and businesses in the world, and users would quickly lose trust in search engines if it were possible to appear on the first page just by optimizing the site for search engines.

Around this topic, an industry of consultants has grown offering search engine optimization services.

I see two possibilities for optimizing a website. The first is to help the search engines by using 'HTML standards' and telling the 'truth' about your site and the second is to find other ways :-). This chapter covers the first possibility.

Search engine optimization (SEO) is the process of improving the visibility of a website or a web page in search engines via the "natural" or un-paid ("organic" or "algorithmic") search results. Wikipedia⁵⁴

Search engine users like to click on natural, un-paid search results instead of paid ads. People try to avoid clicking ads. Google e.g. uses the *PageRank*⁵⁵ algorithm to measure the 'importance' of a site, which is added to its search index.

GETTING INDEXED

Search engines use so-called web crawlers. Once they visit your website, they follow each link on the frontpage and add all those pages to the search index. Keep in mind that web crawlers don't 'see' the site. They are not a human being, they do not use a browser to render your page, they simply look at your HTML code. Sometimes the number of possible URLs they find is so high that it becomes difficult for them to follow them all. This often happens with lists of content items with the possibility of filtering the display or those having a page navigation. Endless combinations of parameters are possible and only a few will return unique content.

Once your website is finished, one of the first steps for you is to say "hi" to the robots of your choice and give them more information about your site. Search engines are very interested in

⁵⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine_optimization

⁵⁵ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PageRank>

knowing about your website because it makes their life easier, too. Try *Google Webmaster Tools*⁵⁶ and the *Bing Webmaster Toolbox*⁵⁷.

HELP YOUR ROBOT

The robot is now visiting your website. It cannot see, it cannot read. You have to help your robot using various methods!

- The robot looks for keywords (words people usually search) in your content, so be aware of that when you write a text. Sometime peoples write content based on recent events on the web to receive a better ranking. Don't write the 455th blog entry about the awesome features of the new iPhone :-). Be careful not to lower the quality of your content through the extensive use of keywords or techniques, like hidden keywords in the same color of the background. The robots are not silly; they simply need a little help.
- The robot also looks at keywords in meta tags. You should also place your keywords there. **Joomla! offers options for adding keywords and other meta tags to your content in nearly every edit form.**
- One of the main ideas of HTML markup is linking. Use this idea to link to other parts of your website from within your content.
- Other websites could link to your site (backlinks). The more sites link to your site, the better. Links directly to your main page are 'more important' than links to pages within your site (deep links). Avoid paid links and comment links from other sites that have a completely different context from yours!
- *URL normalization*⁵⁸ is used to avoid 'robot confusion'. Joomla! provides several methods in the SEO Settings (see chapter [Website and Content Configuration](#) and an *Alias* field below every title in an edit form for creating an individual path.

It is possible to extend that list as long as you want. The two methods which are technically important are the meta tags and the URLs. Joomla! covers both in a good way, additionally Joomla! provides the [Redirects component](#) which helps to avoid 404 pages.

MY PERSONAL VIEW

If you are using a CMS like Joomla! 1.7 and a template like *Beez2*, your HTML output is technically perfect.

As I already said in the chapter [Managing Content](#)

A content management system is useful for managing information that provides value for your audience

⁵⁶ <http://www.google.com/webmaster/tools/>

⁵⁷ <http://www.bing.com/toolbox/webmasters>

⁵⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/URL_normalization

If you create useful information with value for you audience within your website, be sure, every search engine will notice that.

By the way, ever heard of the *Nigritude Ultramarine*⁵⁹?

⁵⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nigritude_ultramarine

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Chapter 20

Multi-Language Websites

I live in Europe. Europe has 23 official languages. If you are going to create websites in regions like this, you have to think about multilingualism. Two things are especially challenging when it comes to creating multi-language websites: the translation of the static Joomla! text strings as well as the translation of the content items. While the first challenge can normally be overcome easily, the second one presents the real challenge.

The Joomla! 1.7 core is available in more than 40 languages and more languages are expected to come soon.

Let's build a multi-language website by using Joomla! 1.6 core in this chapter.

JOOMLA! LANGUAGE PACKAGES

You can download the translation packages from Joomla Code⁶⁰ TO DO LINK or the Joomla! extension directory⁶¹ and install them using the extension manager (*Read more: Extension Management, page 108*). I have done this with the German as well as the French language package. After installation you will find the three installed languages (*Figure 1*) by visiting *Extensions* → *Language Manager* in the backend.



Num	Language	Default	Version	Date	Author	Author Email
1	English (United Kingdom)	★	1.6.0	2008-03-15	Joomla! Project	admin@joomla.org
2	French (FR)	☆	1.6.0	2010-12-24	French translation team : Joomla!fr	traduction@joomla.fr
3	German (Germany-Switzerland-Austria)	☆	1.6.0v1	11.01.2011	J!German	team@j!german.de

Figure 1: Installed languages

Language Configuration

As of now, it is still necessary to have a look at the language configuration to see whether the languages are published (*Extension* → *Language Manager* → *Installed*) and the language content attributes are correct (*Figure 2*). Have a look at (*Extension* → *Language Manager* → *Content*). If there is no content item for the installed language, create one by clicking the new icon. This is what happened to me after I had installed the French language package.

⁶⁰ http://joomlacode.org/gf/project/jtranslation1_6/frs/

⁶¹ <http://extensions.joomla.org/extensions/languages/translations-for-joomla>

Figure 2: Edit content language

LANGUAGE FILTER PLUGIN

For Joomla! to be able to distinguish between the different languages, the *System - Language Filter* plug-in (*Extensions* → *Plug-Ins*) has to be activated. You are able to configure the language to be shown to the visitor, whether it is the language version of your website or the client's browser setting, by simply using the Options settings. Another configuration setting is the *Automatic Language Change*. If enabled, the content language will automatically be changed to the frontend language settings.

Every user can configure his *frontend language* once he is logged in in the frontend. Most of the time, there is a user menu that, depending on your rights, provides you with different menu items. In this user menu, you will also find the *Your profile* link. By clicking on the link, you will then be able to view and edit your profile data. In the profile edit form under *Basic Settings*, users can choose among other configurations and set their *frontend language* (Figure 1). You may use the default website language or one of the available content languages. Depending on these settings, the language plug-in will allow you to view the website in the corresponding language.

Figure 3: User profile - Basic Settings

LANGUAGE SWITCHER MODULE

By activating the *Language Switcher* module, you have the possibility to switch between languages in the frontend, regardless of whether you are a visitor or a logged in user. In Basic Settings you can add text and choose whether you would like the languages to be displayed with the language name or the flag icon. I am sure some third party templates will provide special

templates positions for this module in the near future. In the default template *Beez2*, *position-7* works well in combination with the flags.

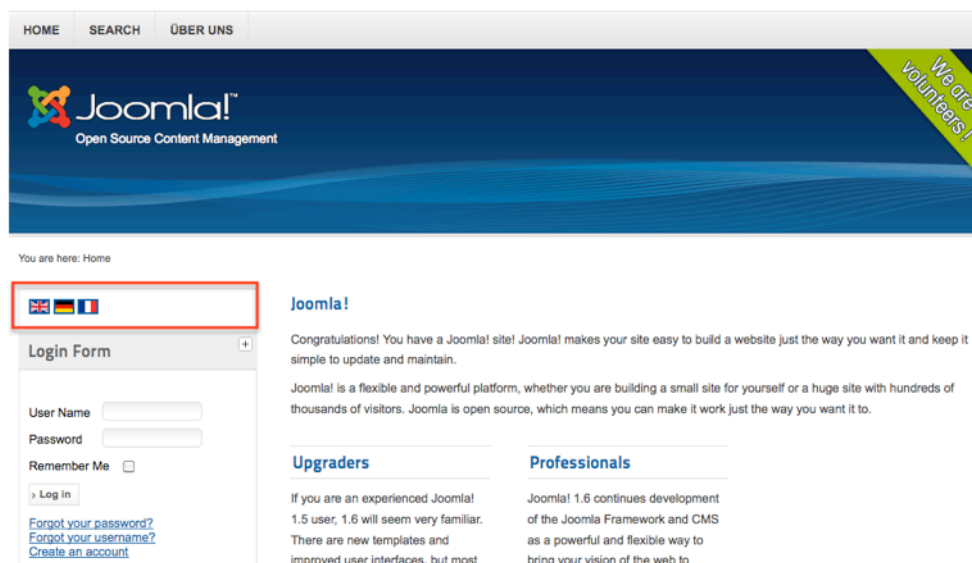


Figure 4: Language Switcher

MULTI-LANGUAGE CONTENT ITEMS

As I have previously mentioned, each content item, such as an article, can be assigned to a language. The difficulty now lies in creating all these content items in all source and target languages (*Figure 5*).

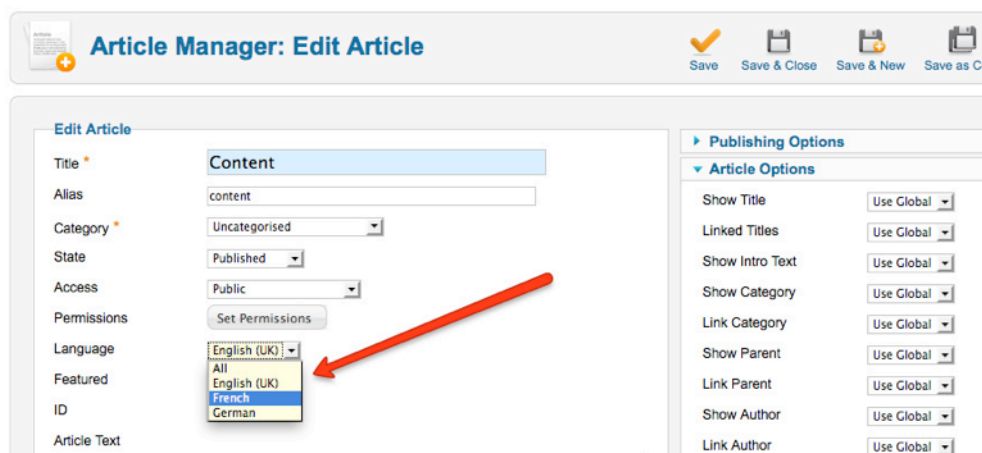


Figure 5: Language field

You can create content items in any language but, unfortunately, Joomla! 1.7 does not yet offer a translating workflow, which means that you have to pay attention to avoid mistakes.

A MULTI-LANGUAGE WEBSITE

My example website consists of

Joomla! 1.7 - Beginner's Guide

- a front page with articles,
- a blog,
- an 'About Us' page,
- a contact form.

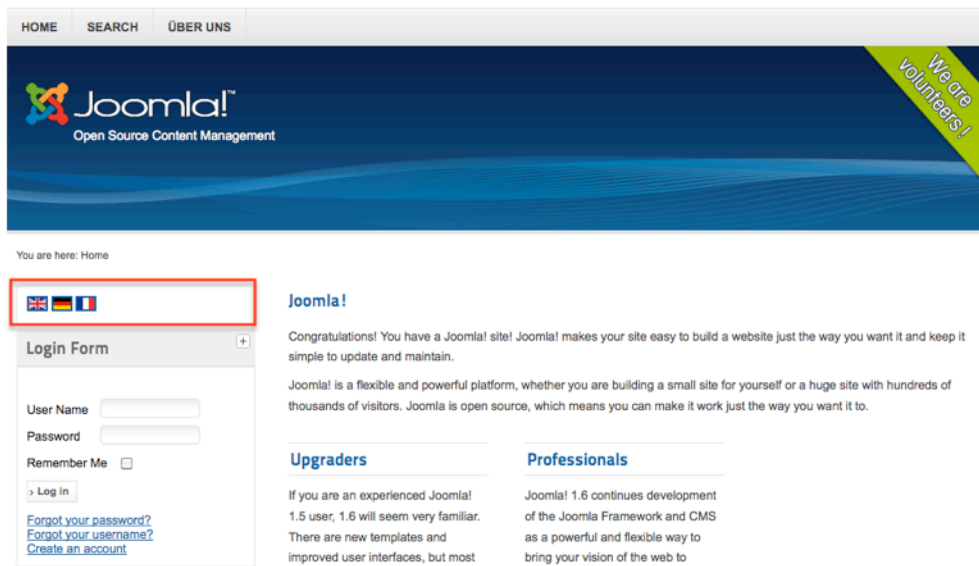


Figure 6: Example website

All content items have to be available in different languages (Figure 6).

Front page

I create a few articles for each language with the attribute featured (*Read more in chapter: [A Typical Article](#)*) and one front page menu item for every language (*Home, Front Page, Accueil*). In *Basic Settings*, I configure the amount of articles and columns being displayed. I assign the attribute *home* to each of these menu items by clicking the *home* icons (Figure 6). When clicking the breadcrumbs 'home' link, you will be redirected to one of the three front pages depending on the language (Figure 7).

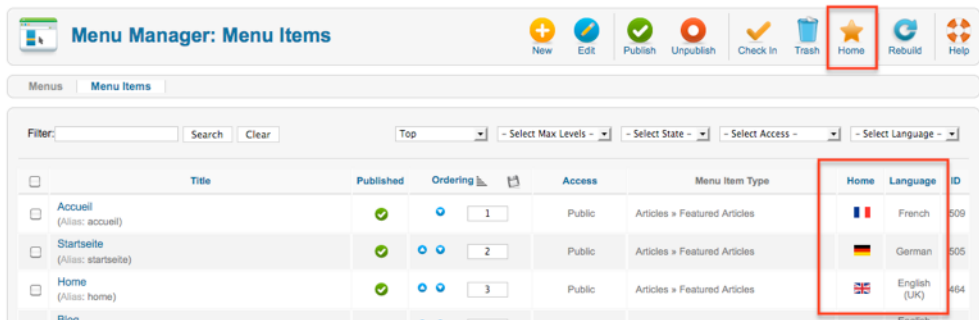


Figure 7: A frontpage for each language

A blog

In my case I already have a blog at cocoate.com, so I use the newsfeeds component for displaying the external blog entries. I create a feed item for each language and the corresponding menu items (*Read more in chapter: [Newsfeeds](#)*).

An 'About Us' page

I create an 'About Us' page as described in chapter [How to create an 'About Us' Page](#) for every language.

A contact form

I use a single contact form for genaral inquiries. I only need one contact item, so it is not necessary to assign a language. Only if contact data differs in different languages, e.g., different address or email, will it be necessary to create one contact item for each language.

Login form

On each page a login form will be visible. I have copied the English login module twice, configured the menu assigment, changed the title and assigned the correct language.

User menu

I used the existing user menu, which provides you with a link to your profile as well as for creating an article or weblinks. (*Figure 8*).

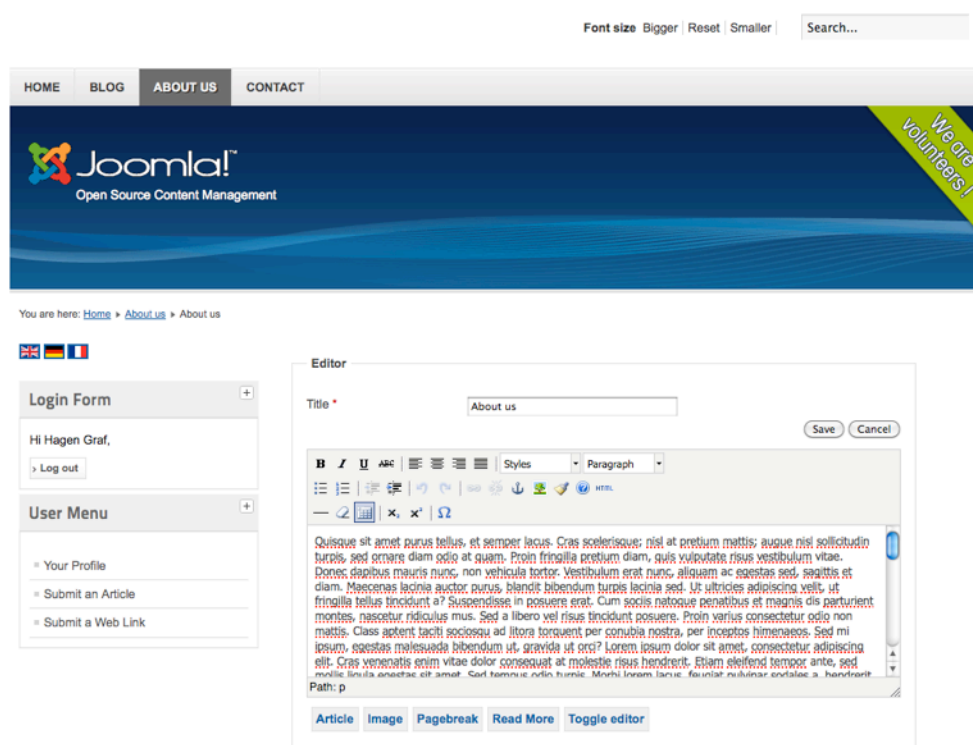


Figure 8: Front-end editing

As you can see, creating a multi-language website with core Joomla! is quite simple!

Advertisement



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Chapter 21

written by Jen Kramer

A Joomla! 1.7 Website from Scratch

FIRST, START WITH A PLAN

There are two kinds of website builders.

The **first** is all too typical. A client asks,

I'd like a website, and I want it blue; how much will that cost?

The builder responds,

If you get it with a calendar, it will cost \$X, or you can also get it with a blog for \$Y.

This kind of builder serves as a button-clicker. The client asks for something, and rather than applying analysis or years of experience to the problem the client needs solve, this builder simply delivers a site the way the client requested it.

The **second** kind of website builder has a future with bigger clients in it. When asked the same question, this builder says,

Sure, we can definitely make your website blue. Can you tell me about your organization and what you hope your website will do for it?

By asking instead about a client's organization and the problems they need solved, you will be developing a relationship of trust with your client. That means completing the site is the start of the relationship with your client, leading to further work, rather than the completion of your relationship with the client. It's much easier to get continuing work from existing clients, rather than continuously seeking new ones.

Assuming you want to be the second, more successful website builder, here are some pointers for putting together your Joomla 1.7 site from scratch.

Goals of the organization, users, and website

Start a discussion with the client about their organization, whether it's a business, a non-profit, or a personal website. You might ask some of the following questions, and there are many additional questions to these:

- What is the goal of the organization? (Examples: end world hunger, make money by selling knitting products, provide updates about my latest activities)
- When was the organization founded and who does the organization serve?
- Why does the organization need a website? Does a website already exist, or is this a new site?
- If a site already exists, what is worth keeping in the old site? What would you add to the content of the old site? Is the site's message still on target, or has the organization changed since the last site design?
- Who will be maintaining the website? (Examples: IT staff, in-house webmaster, the secretary in addition to other duties, or the organization sends its updates to you to complete)

You will likely want to ask many additional questions to these above to fully understand your client and the answers to the following three key questions:

- What are the goals of this organization?
- What are the goals of the website, and how does it support the goals of the organization?
- What do the site visitors want from the website, and how does that fit with the goals of the website and the organization?

Out of this discussion, you should identify some extension types you'll need to include on your site (for example: a calendar with an "upcoming events" module; a blog with comments and tagging; a shopping cart that interfaces with PayPal).

You should also develop a site map for your website. This is a detailed description of all pages on your site and how they link together. The term site map also refers to a page on your site containing links to every page on the site. The first site map you create is spelling out all of the pages and navigation structure on a piece of paper, and the second site map can be generated by an extension like XMap.

For more information on website planning, I recommend the following resources:

- The Elements of User Experience⁶², by Jesse James Garrett
- "Website Strategy and Planning"⁶³, lynda.com video training, by Jen Kramer

NEXT, CONSIDER THE TECHNOLOGY

If you are reading this book, and particularly a chapter called "A Joomla 1.7 Website from Scratch", I assume you have chosen Joomla for building this website.

⁶² <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0321683684/>

⁶³ <http://www.lynda.com/Interactive-Design-tutorials/websitestrategyandplanning/53259-2.html>

Clients may wish to know why you've chosen Joomla for the site, or why it's a good choice of technology for them. Some arguments I use when selling Joomla include:

- Joomla is one of the top three open source content management systems⁶⁴ in the world, backed by a thriving community and an active development process. New releases of software occur every six months.
- Joomla powers over 23.5 million sites worldwide⁶⁵, and it is the choice of over 3000 government sites.
- Because Joomla is open source technology, the client is not tied to a single web development firm, the way they would be with proprietary software. There are many firms available to help with your site.
- Joomla's interface is easy to use, and clients love the ability to make changes to their site without involving a web developer.

It's unlikely you'll use just Joomla's core to build your website. In most cases, you'll want to add some third party extensions to your website. A great place to start looking for these is the Joomla Extension Directory⁶⁶ (JED). Debating which Joomla extensions are "best" or "critical" to each website is a topic of conversation that never seems to get old among Joomla designers and developers.

Do not stack your Joomla site with endless extensions. It's best to pick a minimum number of extensions, just the ones you need most, and don't load the site up with unnecessary additional technology. Each extension should address a purpose identified as part of the goals development process described above. Just because you can put in extra extensions because they're "cool" or you think they're interesting to use does not necessarily mean they should be used on the site, unless they contribute to reaching a site goal.

NOW YOU'RE READY TO BUILD

With a plan established and extensions selected, and your site map in place, you are ready to assemble your Joomla website.

1. [Install Joomla](#).
2. [Create categories for your planned content](#). The categories may be driven by your site map. For example, if you have a part of the site called About Us, you might create a corresponding category. Pages like Board of Directors, History, Mission and Vision, and Management would be included under this category.

⁶⁴ <http://trends.builtwith.com/cms>

⁶⁵ <http://techcrunch.com/2011/06/11/joomla-quietly-crosses-23-million-downloads-now-powering-over-2600-government-sites/>

⁶⁶ <http://extensions.joomla.org/>

3. Enter your content into the website using the Article Manager. Each planned page might become an article. Helpful resources for understanding this process include:
 - 3.1. [A Typical Article](#)
 - 3.2. [How to Create an 'About Us' Page](#)
 - 3.3. [Media Manager](#), which is used for managing any images or documents you wish to include with your article
4. [Link articles to your navigation bars](#) on the website via the Menu Item Manager.
5. [Install a template](#) that makes the website look the way you wish. You can do this step earlier, but I find it easier to evaluate the look of a template once some content is available to me in the website.
6. [Configure any extensions](#) required for your website. For example, it's highly likely that you will want to [include a contact form](#) for your site.
7. Test your website carefully. Make sure the navigation links to the expected pages and functions on the site. Read all content carefully for typos. Look at the site in several different web browsers (like Firefox, Safari, Chrome, and Internet Explorer) on both Mac and PC platforms. The site does not need to be exactly the same, but it should look reasonable in all browsers.
8. Launch your website. You may wish to do a "soft launch" first, meaning you post the site without press releases or a big public promotion. This gives you some time to test the site in a real-world environment, while fixing any additional problems that may arise. Once the site has been active for a week or two, you can do a "hard launch", meaning creating publicity for the new site.

9.

Advertisement



“We are building a template club with a twist... We thought, what if you could have a Joomla! template, and with a few easy clicks, completely change it visually in a hundred different ways, regardless of the content?

“So we put on our creative thinking hats, got to know the T3 framework, CSS 3, HTML 5, made lots of great artwork, put it all together for Joomla! 1.7, and hey presto, we have **Tc4j**, a completely new way of using templates!

“...and we made it for you
...and we think you'll love it!”

See you soon, David & Andreas

Templateclub4joomla.com

.....where great technology meets creative design

Chapter 22

written by Andreas Kölln

Must have Extensions

Joomla! is a content management system (CMS) with all of the necessary extensions in the base package.

What is the sense of this chapter? If you want to work with Joomla! in a secure, comfortable and efficient manner, and you want to publish interesting information on your website with prepared modules, plug-ins and components, you will soon reach some limitations of what is possible with only the base extensions of Joomla!. Here we will give you an overview of our selection of helpful third-party extensions, for use in the front-end, or back-end, to make your work easier!

There are more than 8,000 extensions available for Joomla! (look at joomla.org). This chapter can offer only a small selection, a choice that must be made subjectively from the viewpoint of the author. "Must Have" here, doesn't mean that a website can't be made without them, it means rather, that you will be able to make a successful website with greater ease and flexibility.

For each extension there is a brief explanation as to why it may be helpful and why it is the best choice for each category of extensions!

We only look at extensions that are prepared for Joomla! 1.6 or 1.7. This guarantees their compatibility with the new version of the Joomla! CMS.

The rapid development and the limited space of this chapter means that the list remains incomplete, and each user with some experiences would probably have another opinion regarding our list.

The list does not include extensions that are of interest to only a specific area (e.g. for an on-line shop). This wouldn't follow the idea of "Must Have" for nearly ALL users.

The extension will be separated to the back-end and front-end. Sometimes it not really easy to assign an extension specifically to one of these areas, but for the general overview it is helpful. In both sections the author gives a premium award for the most innovative idea.

The lists are certainly a small advertisement for the nominated extensions, but it must be this way if they are helpful for users and administrators.

The author wants to follow the concept of Open Source from Joomla!. For this reason there are only GPL-License extensions in the list (sometimes there are extensions with a free and a pro version).

“MUST HAVE” EXTENSIONS FOR THE BACK-END

The criteria for the selection of extensions for the back-end are:

- speed of operation,
- ease of administration,
- improved security,
- and the overview!

The most innovative ideas for the back-end are two extensions by Stephen Brandon of New Zealand.

His extensions are named **MetaMod** (free and pro version) and **Chameleon** (formerly MetaTemplate Pro)!

This is small summary of the extensions directly from the creator:

MetaMod

Have you ever been in a situation on your Joomla! site where you wanted modules to appear or disappear on a particular page, but it seemed impossible to achieve? You probably found that you can only assign modules to pages that are directly assigned to a menu item.

MetaMod gets around this fundamental Joomla! restriction, and allows you to make modules display (or disappear) on absolutely any page of your site. Furthermore, modules can be controlled by a number of additional factors:

- date and time (e.g. recurring time slots)
- page type (e.g. article pages, or search results pages)
- GeoIP country, city, area etc
- group membership, or for specific users
- browser or front-end language
- comprehensive VirtueMart support, and support/detection for many other major extensions
- random selection
- and more!

MetaMod Pro is commercial GPL, reasonably priced, and backed by comprehensive support on the forum. If there's ever something unusual you need to do with modules, ask on the forum. Chances are, with MetaMod Pro it's possible. Licence: Commercial GPL

The free version of MetaMod works in almost the same way as MetaMod Pro, but just has a few limitations in the way that the "target" modules are laid out on the page. In the free version, the target modules are placed within a MetaMod "placeholder" module, which introduces extra HTML around the included module(s). This can sometimes cause CSS styling anomalies, and can prevent module positions from collapsing even when it appears that they do not contain any published modules. Despite the possible layout issues, MetaMod (free) is used in thousands of

web sites around the world and is a great way to learn MetaMod and to try it out in different situations.

Licence: GPL

Chameleon (formerly MetaTemplate)

With Chameleon your site can change templates and menus to fit different situations (*Figure 1*).

The screenshot shows the Chameleon extension configuration page. At the top, there's a header with the Joomla! logo, a 'Rule: [Edit]' button, the 'chameleon' logo, and several action buttons: 'Save', 'Save & Close', 'Save & New', 'Save as Copy', and 'Close'. The main content area is split into two columns. The left column, titled 'Details', contains a 'Title' field with the example text 'Example: Authors and Editors get special style', a 'Status' dropdown set to 'Published', an 'Ordering' dropdown set to '2. Example: Recurring timeslot', and a 'Note' field with a yellow background containing text about the example. Below this is a sidebar with expandable sections: 'Config', 'Quick Rules', 'Environment', 'Menu Handling', 'Content and Components', and 'Users and Groups'. The 'Users and Groups' section is expanded, showing 'User IDs' and 'Groups' options. Under 'Groups', 'Selected groups' is chosen, and a list of user groups is shown, with 'Manager' selected. The right column, titled 'SUCCEED Actions', contains various configuration options: 'Set TemplateStyle' (Beez2 - Default), 'Site Default Menu Item' (## Ignore ##), 'Active Menu Item' (## Ignore ##), 'Unpublish Menus' (## Ignore ##), 'Cookies/session vars 1' and '2' (## Ignore ##), 'Run PHP' (a text area), 'and' (radio buttons for 'Stop processing', 'Process next rule in chain', and 'Redirect...'), 'redirect page...' (## Ignore ##), 'Redirect url...' (a text field), 'Page Title' (a text field), 'MetaDescription' (a text field), 'MetaKeywords' (a text field), 'HTML head include type 1' (CSS file), and 'HTML head include 1' (a text area).

Figure 1: Chameleon extension

Studies show you have less than 1 second to convince a visitor to stay on your site. If your visitor Googles for “sports” and ends up on your site, then that visitor is likely to engage and purchase more if the site template is sports-themed. Is the visitor French? Show advertisements en français. Once you’ve started you’ll find it hard to stop thinking of more and more creative ways to engage your visitors. Chameleon makes it easy to select a template, home page and a selection of menu items to show/hide, then determine where and when these will be applied to the site.

Chameleon for marketers: Re-brand your site depending on the visitor's Google search terms –

or by their country or language. Perform A/B testing on different templates & menus and find out what converts best.

- Chameleon in eCommerce: Streamline the user's shopping experience by switching to a simplified template for checkout or other parts of the shopping cart system.
- Chameleon for site admins: Make your site multi-purpose; embed it in a Facebook tab, switch templates for different devices, or choose a different template, menu and home page for different sub-domains of your site.
- Chameleon is unique, revolutionary technology. There is no other software available on the market which can help you identify, then attempt to match customer expectations from the moment they land on your Joomla! site.

Licence: Commercial GPL

<http://metamodpro.com>

LIST OF OTHER PROPOSED EXTENSIONS FOR THE BACK-END

Topic: Backup

Why this may be helpful:

For security reasons it is necessary to continuously create a backup of your site. With this extension you can make it easily and professionally.

Proposed extension: Akeeba Backup

Akeeba Backup Core is the successor to the now famous JoomlaPack component. With Akeeba Backup you can create a site backup that can be restored on any Joomla!-capable server. The archive contains all the files, a database snapshot and an installer similar in function to the standard Joomla! installer. The backup and restore process is AJAX powered to avoid server timeouts, even with huge sites.

For Joomla! 1.6 using the same installation package, since 3.0.rc1, Akeeba Backup was the first extension to fully embrace Joomla! 1.6. Note: in order to install to Joomla! 1.6 RC1 or later you have to use Akeeba Backup 3.2.b1 or later. Earlier versions won't work due to changes made in Joomla! 1.6 after RC1.

Akeeba is at this moment the best backup possibility for Joomla!

<http://www.akeebabackup.com/>

Topic: SEO

Why this may be helpful:

For better search engine results.

Proposed extension: shs404SEF

sh404SEF rewrites Joomla URL to user-friendly format (SEF URL or URL rewriting):
mysite.com/index.php?option=com_content&Itemid=69&id=34... becomes mysite.com/en/sh404SEF-and-url-rewriting/list-of-available-plugins.html.

It is a security component, as well as a page title and meta tags manager for every page. Works with or without .htaccess file. It is Joomfish compatible. It is a caching system for high speed with very small DB queries overhead.

A lot of well known components will be supported.

<http://anything-digital.com/sh404sef/seo-analytics-and-security-for-joomla.html>

Topic: Antispam

Why this may be helpful:

Now, more so than ever, a protection against spam is absolutely important!

Proposed extension: EasyCalcCheck PLUS

In the core forms and also with 3rd party extensions, there is no protection against spam. This nice plugin adds an arithmetic problem, a hidden field and a time lock. Integrated anti-spam services are: ReCaptcha, Akismet, Bot-Trap, Honeypot Project, Mollom, StopForumSpam, and BotScout

<http://joomla-extensions.kubik-rubik.de/ecc-easycalccheck-plus>

Topic: Content Editor

Why this may be helpful:

The Joomla! editor has the necessary functions. An extra editor, such as this, provides many useful opportunities.

Proposed extension: JCE Editor

If you want to work more productively writing articles, an extra editor will be helpful! A well known, configurable WYSIWYG editor based on Moxiecode TinyMCE, is the JCE Editor. It includes advanced Image/Media, File and Link handling, plugin support, and an Administration interface for the editor configuration.

<http://www.joomlackeditor.com/>

Topic: Flexible placement of modules, articles and components

Why this may be helpful:

These are two nice plugins from Peter von Westen and one from Mike Reumer which I have added to the list!

Proposed extensions:

- Modules Anywhere,
- Articles Anywhere,
- Plugin Include Component

Modules Anywhere

With this plugin you can place modules anywhere that you can enter text. With Modules Anywhere you can include a single module or complete module positions anywhere in your site, including within 3rd party components and even within other modules. Modules Anywhere is very flexible, it works anywhere, not only in articles. It even works in modules and you can load a single module, not only complete module positions.

<http://www.nonumber.nl/modulesanywhere>

Articles Anywhere

With this plugin you can place articles anywhere that you can enter text. Articles Anywhere is a plugin that allows you to insert articles anywhere on your site. So you can place articles inside modules or in other components or wherever. You can place articles using the syntax:

- Using the title of the article: {article Some article}...{/article}
- Using the alias of the article: {article some-article}...{/article}
- Using the id of the module: {article 123}...{/article}

Within those tags you can place different tags to place different article data/details.

<http://www.nonumber.nl/articlesanywhere>

Plugin Include Component

This plugin is to include a component in an article without an iframe. The links will work like in a normal page, the styling of the site will be used, and also the style of the component. The syntax is {component url=""}

http://joomlancode.org/gf/project/include_comp/

Topic: Integrates the javascript framework

Why this may be helpful:

The framework is very powerful and expands Joomla in various ways.

Proposed extension: JQuery++ Integrator

This plugin brings jQuery, jQuery UI and jQuery Tools to your site. It supports grabbing the libraries from both Content Delivery Networks (CDNs) and local copies, allows to activate *jQuery.noConflict()* mode if necessary. It also includes one of jQuery UI themes: *uiLightness* (and you can download and use any other theme).

<http://tushev.org/products/jqueryintegrator>

Topic: Integration of scripts

Why this may be helpful:

With this plugin you can use different scripts inside Joomla.

Proposed extension: Embed Any Script

Include JS, VB scripts to your site with ease!

With this plugin, you will be able to embed a list of scripts in every page of the site. As well, the plugin supports in-article tags to embed scripts only to specific pages. Those tags can be, not only in articles, but also in modules etc. - anywhere in html.

<http://tushev.org/>

Topic: Control of Administration

Why this may be helpful:

Improved clarity to the admin panel

Proposed extension: KC Admin Quickicons

The KC Admin QuickIcons administrator module allows the administrator to add up to 10 quicker icon access links to the Joomla back-end administrator control panel. Each icon has a text label, a link and it can use an icon from the khepri or bluestork template or you can use your own custom icon (48px x 48px).

<http://www.keashly.net/administration/kc-admin-quickicon>

Topic: Filemanager

Why this may be helpful:

Faster and more clearly arranged file management

Proposed extension: eXtplorer

eXtplorer is a web-based file management component, for all your needs. It has a desktop-application-like interface with drag&drop, a grid and a directory tree, and makes heavy use of the ExtJS Javascript Library.

You can use it to access and modify the files and directories on your server via FTP or direct file access.

<http://extplorer.sourceforge.net/>

Topic: Administrator help

Why this may be helpful:

This simple plugin will prevent admin session expiration. Prevent a loss, for example, of input texts.

Proposed extension: Admin Forever

You will never be logged out when you don't want it to happen.

<http://edo.webmaster.am/projects>

Topic: Compression

Why this may be helpful:

Minimize external Javascripts and CSS files into one, to minimize expensive http request.

Proposed extension: JCH Optimize

The files can be minified and gzipped to reduce bandwidth and to further optimize download time. Typical results after plugin is configured with optimum settings for your site is a 6-10 point jump on Page Speed.

<http://jch-optimize.sourceforge.net/>

Topic: Cache handling

Why this may be helpful:

Intelligent caching makes accessing the pages faster

Proposed extension: JOT Cache

JotCache is an advanced solution for page caching in Joomla! 1.6 framework.

JotCache consists of JotCache Plugin and JotCache Component.

JotCache Plugin is an extended replacement of the standard System-Cache plugin, but with a lot of enhancements!

<http://www.kanich.net/radio/site/>

“MUST HAVE” EXTENSIONS FOR THE FRONT-END

The extensions for the front-end have been selected with a view to important basic functions that give faster access and options for visitors to a website, and that are not provided in the basic package of Joomla!. Some components, modules and plugins are certainly not indispensable, but at the moment, for example, there are almost no websites without a spectacular slideshow on the frontpage.

For the front-end, the author gives the award to a small extension, which shows pictures/icons (with links) at every corner(Figure 2).



Figure 2: Optimized Campaign extension

This extension has the name Optimized Campaign and comes from o-sense!

In these times of tumultuous changes and global problems it gives the site owner the possibility to express their support for an important project, their opposition to a negative development in politics, or only a simple discount for a product. This gives the website an individual note. An idea, which the author tries to implement with his own template project (tc4j.com).

This module will allow you to put an image in one of the four corners of your page in either a fixed way (The image will not scroll down with the page), so it will remain in the corner. Or scrollable (the image will scroll with the page).

This will be great in campaigns, live chat usage, Find us and Follow us use.

<http://www.o-sense.com/>

Topic: Contact

Why this may be helpful:

The contact component from Joomla! is very simple and has only a few possibilities.

Proposed extension: Fox Contact form

A fast and very easy to setup contact form designed for Joomla! 1.6.

Tableless and css styled output simplify integration into your website.

Some interesting features:

- Multiple recipients
- Antispam system
- Captcha system
- Multi-language

and more

<http://www.fox.ra.it/joomla-extensions/fox-contact-form.html>

Topic: Search

Why this may be helpful:

Your visitors can quickly detect whether a keyword is available on the website.

Proposed extension: RokAjaxsearch

This powerful module brings fantastic search functionality to Joomla!, using the powerful and versatile javascript library, Mootools, as well as full Google Search integration(Figure 3).

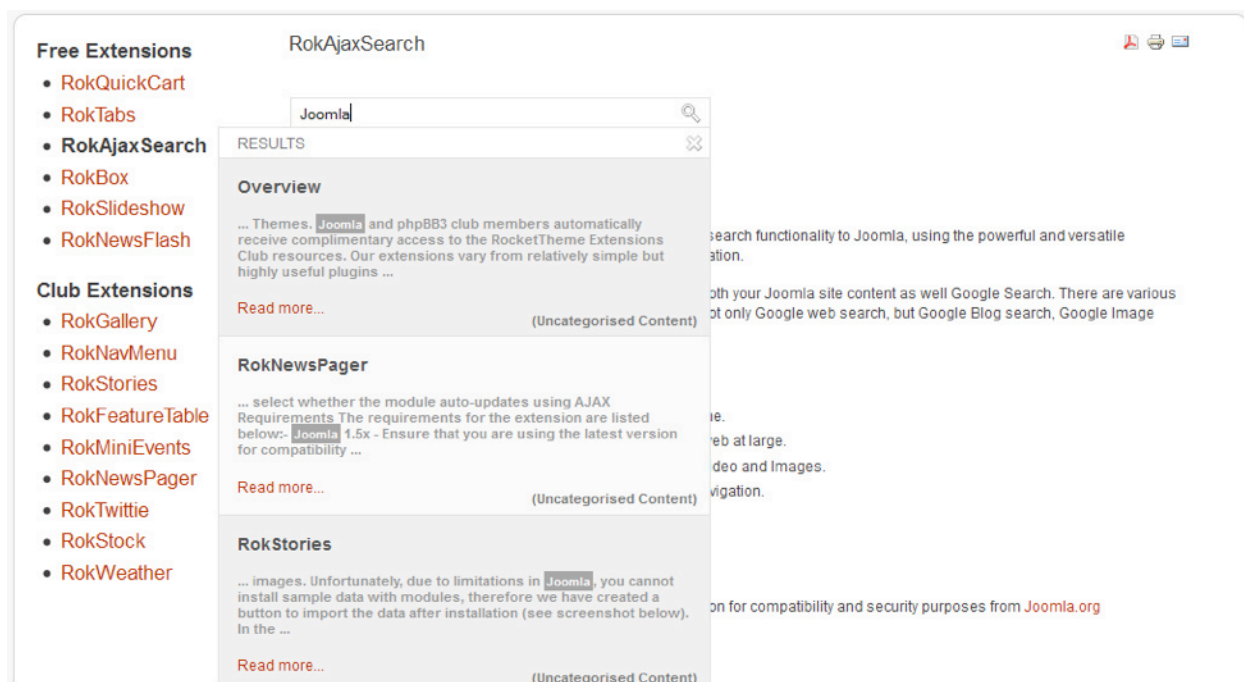


Figure 3: RokAjaxsearch extension

<http://www.rockettheme.com/extensions-joomla/rokajaxsearch>

Topic: Slideshow

Why this may be helpful:

Nearly every modern website has a slideshow, often on the frontpage. It helps to give the visitors a nice impression of your identity.

Proposed extensions:

- Image Show GK4
- LOF Articles Slideshow Module

Image Show GK4

With Image Show GK4 module, you can create a slideshow on a site that include various images and article fragments or texts defined by a user.

Thanks to slide management system integrated in the module, its support is very easy, intuitive and fast. With the new method of creating module styles you can easily move your slideshow style from one template to other template.

From now on, thanks to the rebuilt administrative panel, it allows you to manage slides without additional component use.

<http://tools.gavick.com>

LOF Articles Slideshow Module

The module is the most eye-catching way of displaying featured articles into a slide show. The module is usually put at the top of the main content. With many animations supported and

with an easy way to control the module display via simple parameters, you can do everything you would like, to impress you client.

<http://landofcoder.com/joomla/f33/lof-articlesslideshow-module>

Topic: Video player

Why this may be helpful:

With new cameras, it is easy and cheap to shoot your own videos and to put them on your site.

Proposed extension: JPlayer

JPlayer is a simple flash player plugin for Joomla based on flash player "JW Player". This plugin is a fork of AllVideos plugin (by JoomlaWorks). JPlayer has simplified code without unnecessary functions but is enhanced with lots of useful features.

The plugin is easy to use, offers a lot of tunable parameters, plays video with subtitles and much more.

<http://vault.futurama.sk/joomla/>

Topic: Gallery

Why this may be helpful:

An easy way to make your own photo album!

Proposed extension:

- Phoca Gallery,
- Simple Image Gallery (SIGE)

Phoca Gallery

Phoca Gallery is a Joomla! component that offer an image gallery with slideshow. With a lot of add-ons, it meets almost all requirements.

<http://www.phoca.cz/phocagallery/>

Simple Image Gallery (SIGE)

SIGE (Simple Image Gallery Extended) is a powerful gallery content plugin for Joomla!. It offers numerous opportunities to present pictures quickly and easily in articles. The special feature of the plugin is that you can control any parameter on the syntax call.

<http://joomla-extensions.kubik-rubik.de/sige-simple-image-gallery-extended>

Topic: Facebook integration

Why this may be helpful:

Facebook is, at this time, a must-have platform to make your site popular.

Proposed extension: Facebook Link Content Image

It adds in the header of the page, absolute links to images found in article. It is useful for sharing links on the Facebook Wall. Compatible with Open Graph. Plugin works only for

components which fires events from Content Plugins, e.g. Joomla! Articles, Section/Category Blog, Frontpage/Featured.

It Works only for HTTP urls!

<http://www.perfect-web.pl/download/joomla/plugins>

Topic: Social bookmarking

Why this may be helpful:

A bridge from Joomla! to the social network and to the social marketing!

Proposed extension: Nice Social Bookmark

This module shows icons from the 12 best known social networking sites (delicious, digg, facebook, google, linkedin, mixx, myspace, newsvine, reddit, stumbleupon, technorati, twitter and rss feed). There are 4 different sizes of icons to choose from (24,32,48,64) and 6 different sets of icons (aquatic, orange round, white round, logorunner, glass and iPhone)

<http://salamander-studios.com/>

Topic: Tweet

Why this may be helpful:

More and more people build up their own tweet to inform others very quickly about their news.

Proposed extension: Tweet Display 1901

Tweet Display 1901 is a simple module, that will automatically show your twitter feed in a nice widget on you site.

<http://a.1901webdesign.com/>

Topic: Menu

Why this may be helpful:

Upgrade your own website and make it more accessible with helpful advanced navigation!

Proposed extension: Art Wijmo Menu

Art Wijmo Menu is a free customizable menu with horizontal and vertical layouts with multiple themes!

<http://www.artetics.com/>

A good alternative module: Maxi Menu CK

Topic: Sitemap

Why this may be helpful:

A sitemap is good for visitors and good for search engines!

Proposed extension: XMap

Xmap is a Site Map generator component for Joomla!. Xmap allows you to create a map of your site using the structure of your menus.

A lot of plugins are available for the most popular components!

<http://joomla.vargas.co.cr/>

Topic: Visitor counter

Why this may be helpful:

This is to show visitors the popularity of the website!

Proposed extension: VCNT

Small and fast visitor counter module for Joomla! 1.6

Features:

- Shows Today - Yesterday - Weekly - Monthly - All statistics
- Locktime
- Preset Counter
- Automatically cleans up the database
- Horizontal view
- Exclude bots
- Exclude IP-addresses
- XHTML 1.1 and CSS valid
- MVC

New: Contest - A winner can be determined after a certain number of visitors

<http://joomla-extensions.kubik-rubik.de/vcnt-visitorcounter>

Topic: Typographie

Why this may be helpful:

Easily usable graphical enhancements for its own articles

Proposed extension: JB Type

JB Type is a Joomla style and typography plugin for your content. By using some simple Joomla! syntax you can create some awesome typography for your site without knowing any html at all. The plugin simply renders predefined styles in your content. Now it comes with a JCE plugin that allows you to render the JB Type styles in the editor window as well.

<http://www.joomlabamboo.com/joomla-extensions/jb-type-joomla-typography-plugin>

Topic: Favicon

Why this may be helpful:

Eyecatching web address

Proposed extension: Phoca FaviconA simple component that generates a favicon on your Joomla! site. You can change the favicon whenever you like.

<http://www.phoca.cz/phocafavicon/>

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Chapter 23

Upgrade from older versions

The update process is as easy as described in this wonderful info graphic created by Kyle Ledbetter (Figure 1).

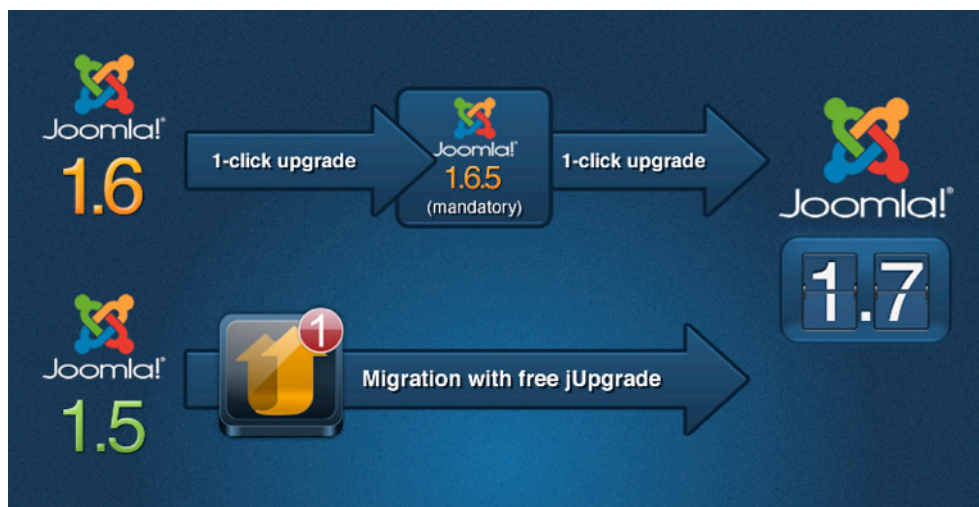


Figure 1: [Joomla! 1.7 Upgrade-Info](#) (created by Kyle Ledbetter⁶⁷)

UPDATE FROM JOOMLA! 1.6.5

Well, that's an easy one.

Visit Extensions → Extension Manager → Update

click the button and your done!

It's the time to relax, grab a coffee and think:

Well, it was a good decision to start my new project with Joomla! 1.6

Attention: Many text strings in the language files are changed. The one-click update doesn't include local language packages. If you have installed local language packages it is necessary to update those, by reinstalling.

In case you think this 'one click solution' is far too easy. It cannot be true! Have a look at the more detailed Joomla! documentation⁶⁸.

⁶⁷ <http://www.kyleledbetter.com/>

⁶⁸ http://docs.joomla.org/Upgrade_1.6.5_to_1.7

MIGRATE FROM JOOMLA! 1.5

How can you migrate a Joomla! 1.5 website to Joomla! 1.7 without loss of data or similar disasters?

There are two ways to complete the update:

1. You can update the existing Joomla! 1.5 website by using an additional component. This component loads all the necessary files with one click to your Joomla! 1.5 website and automatically converts them to Joomla! 1.7.
2. You can create an empty Joomla! 1.7 website and insert the data from the Joomla! 1.5 website manually.

Auto upgrade from Joomla! 1.5 to Joomla! 1.7

WARNING: The upgrade component I am using does not allow the transfer of data from **ALL** third-party components.

But, generally, I think the idea is a good one. :-)

Before you begin, please answer the following questions with a loud and clear YES.

Does your server environment meet the minimum requirements for Joomla! 1.7?

- PHP, version 5.2.4 or higher
(**Not** for Joomla 1.7 but for the upgrade component, you will need the CURL module in PHP.)
- MySQL, version 5.0.4 or higher

Are all the installed extensions available for Joomla! 1.7?

Have a look at the extension directory extensions⁶⁹.

Is the installed template available for Joomla! 1.7, or are you able to change it manually?

Here is a good presentation by Chris Davenport. It's about Joomla! 1.6 but in general, nothing changed in Joomla! 1.7.

Are you experienced enough to change small snippets of code with instruction :-)?

If you feel comfortable and answered all the questions with yes ... let's go!

Step 1: Back-up

Before you do anything else, please do a backup of your site. You are probably already using *Akeeba Backup* [5]. The extension is available for version Joomla! 1.5 and 1.6. If not, install it and do a back-up of your site!

⁶⁹ <http://extensions.joomla.org/extensions/advanced-search-results/524478>

Step 2: Create a local copy of your site

If you set up a local copy manually, you will need to

- copy your files
- dump your MySQL database, create a local database and import the dump into the local one
- change configuration.php

You can also implement the process with Akeeba backup, which allows you to create a zip package of your site. To again create a website from this package, you will need the *Akeeba Kickstarter*.⁷⁰

- Place the kickstart files and the zip package of your website in the local folder of your website (*htdocs*).
- Create an empty database for your Joomla! 1.5
- Launch kickstart.php. Presumably, the URL will look like <http://localhost/kickstart.php>. Then follow the instructions.

Step 3: Upgrade component

There is an upgrade component by Matias Aguirre⁷¹. The following data will be transferred:

It migrates for sure

- Banners - 100%
- Categories - 100%
- Contacts - 100%
- Content - 100%
- Menus - 100%
- Modules - 100%
- Newsfeeds - 100%
- Users - 100%
- Weblinks - 100%

Install the component⁷² in your local Joomla! 1.5 installation. Launch it and start the upgrade - that's it. :-)

⁷⁰ <http://www.akeebabackup.com>

⁷¹ <http://twitter.com/maguirre>

⁷² <http://www.matware.com.ar/downloads/joomla/jupgrade.html>

The component creates a folder with the name `jupgrade` and installs the Joomla! 1.7 variant of your 1.5 website in this new folder (<http://localhost/jupgrade>).

The Joomla! 1.7 core template is activated..

Language files

If you use Joomla! in a language other than English, you first have to install the correct language files⁷³.

Template

Customize your template and activate it.

GENERAL JOOMLA! DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

This wonderful graphic give you a precise idea of the future (*Figure 2*).

⁷³ <http://extensions.joomla.org/extensions/languages/translations-for-joomla>

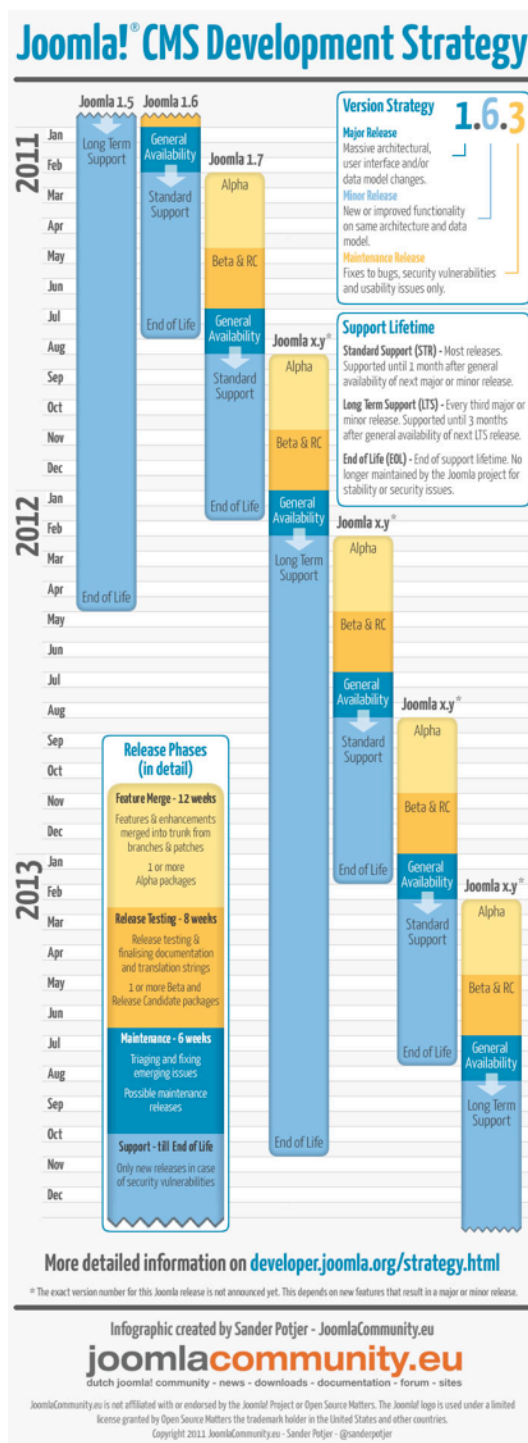


Figure 2: General Joomla! Development Strategy (Graphic created by Sander Potjer⁷⁴)

⁷⁴ <http://sanderpotjer.nl/>

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and I still need the cool ad :)

Chapter 24

written by Henk van Cann

Earning respect and money with Joomla

CMS implementation is difficult, but great to be involved with. How good you are technically, how socially connected you are, what a honest and hard worker you are - it doesn't add to the respect & money you receive.

This chapter deals with what you should and shouldn't do to make a living with Joomla! implementation and support.

The things that do count in earning respect and money:

- be firm but sympathetic;
- Deadline first, flex the scope;
- Sell and negotiate continuously;
- Define roles and play them!

WHY ME?

Do you ever:

- have customers that don't pay your invoice?
- work twice as much as you're getting paid for?
- have a big misunderstanding about the deliverables with your customer?
- encounter disrespectful behavior of clients?
- frown upon the choices customers make in your field of expertise?
- get no or low appreciation for what you've delivered?
- need to battle scope creep?
- take much longer to deliver, but the customer did not care?
- discuss with your partner wife or husband about whether it's a good idea to continue your firm

- think of going back to a normal and easy job?

You are not alone.

If all the answers are 'no' you are natural talent in earning respect & money with open source CMS expertise.

Or you've worked through this chapter before?

DENIAL

After years of long days and hard work, you only find your soul mates at open source congresses and meetings. Where we share our experiences. Or via the IRC channel, where we like to complain about our customers: they're stupid, they don't want to pay, they think they know it all, they expect you to go to work without them putting pen to paper, and so on.

What's happening here is that we are in denial. The customer is not the problem. We ourselves have to change our attitude.

"I'm not good at selling, I like to build systems."

Fair enough, but did you start up your own organization to be in charity work? Charity workers get respect and "sell" their free help.

If you have decided to start your own firm, not selling is not an option. You have to get off the wrong bus quickly.

"I'm not what you call a salesperson - I'm too soft. To be honest: I hate selling."

You need a change in how you perceive the world. Selling is a profession that should be indicated as "assisting with purchasing". Put aside your prejudice! Start assisting your customer in purchasing the right things (instead of selling), and teach them how to give you the respect and treatment you deserve, plus payment.

"Larger organizations don't contract small firms on their bigger projects."

Play their game, play it well and they will hire you.

"My customers don't work this way."

Well, then get a different type of customer, or teach your current customers "how it works".

"There is not much money to be made in open source"

On the contrary: Open source integration has at least five major innovational effects⁷⁵ that closed source can't beat. Proven and indisputable. For that reason long term or short term replacement propositions of closed source by open source "are" big money. Just because closed source is about big money. Closed source will eventually adapt itself to open source innovation. But that will take time. In the meanwhile, your expertise is worth respect & money. If your have

⁷⁵ <http://www.2value.nl/en/weblog/weblog/five-innovative-characteristics-of-open-source>

not been convinced yet, click the link above about the said innovative effects of open technology because you need to ooze pride.

Still in denial?

Sorry for bothering you! Please continue your good work and put your mind at rest with the other chapters you'll find in this book. One last request: could you please efface yourself quietly, poor and lonely? :-)

The other chapters are very much worth reading. Don't get me wrong. Don't however lull yourself to sleep by obtaining more technical knowledge only as a distraction from a totally different ballgame: earning respect & money. Because that's got nothing to do with Joomla, Drupal, TYPO3 or any other world class open source CMS, nor your great expertise.

Awake? Good, we need a clear mind to learn & practice how to earn respect & money with our expertise & means.

THREE THING YOU NEED TO BE AWARE OF ALL THE WAY THROUGH

- Your reputation
- Your role(s)
- Your task(s)

Add a. Your reputation

In general, the reputation of IT workers can be found at the low end of the spectrum of respected jobs. Not sure you agree? Try it!

1. Wear a suit, start talking of a business proposition to anybody. Suddenly switch to the details of a possible IT-implementation of that particular proposition. Your credibility decreases instantly.
2. Mention your IT-profession at a party to (female) young urban professionals. Just look at the faces.

Add b&c. Your roles and tasks

In organizations, our IT-job is to persist in constant expectation management, infinite selling and sticking to plans

The good news is that there is a lot of material available detailing the process of a web system implementation. The bad news: help, humans are involved!

Problems are those weird things that pop up when you don't have your eye on the ball: earn money and respect.

FIRST SOME DEFINITIONS

Resource

A resource is pending input from a customer or third party. If you don't get the resource, you can't do or finish your job. E.g. digital photos from a photographer, a list of menu-item names in a different language, a signature on the contract of your assignment (oops, you never ask for that?), etc.

Resourceplanning

Ensuring that the input of customers and third parties is ready for use in a project or support.

Scope

The extent of a solution. The size and magnitude of an effort, expertise, machinery, functionality that is wanted/planned to offer that solution. <google scope - wikipedia>

Functionality-blocks

A logical group of functionality under a common title. Expressed in normal "homo sapiens" language. E.g. a forum, design, interface, advanced search. (A homo digitalis would invent titles like Jom-social, psd plus html/css and template based on wire frame, database lookup of indexed content.)

Release plan

The release plan specifies which Functionality-blocks are going to be implemented for each system release and dates for those releases. The release plan specifies who (in which role) fulfills the particular tasks.

Sprint

All efforts within a certain phase in a project (as agreed in a release plan). The word "sprint" suggests running to a deadline, no time to lose. We have to catch an airplane in time. Because the airplane will leave and we better be on it. And therefore we might not pack our bag that well, some items might be missing, we might go in fits and starts, but we get there in time! By doing so, we are much better off than having all stuff beautifully packed: everything we might need is packed in the suitcase, but we are left behind on the airport.

SprintX

The virtual sprint after the last planned sprint within the release plan. It is a container for extra work (scope creep or agreed out of scope) or waiting area for functionality-blocks that couldn't be implemented in the sprints so far.

Contract management

The management of contracts made with customers, vendors, partners, or employees. Contract management includes negotiating the terms and conditions in contracts and ensuring compliance with the terms and conditions, as well as documenting and agreeing on any changes that may arise during its implementation. The purpose: maximizing financial and operational performance and minimizing risk.

Project management

The discipline of planning, organizing, securing and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives. Put it differently: running from A to B without looking up and getting there in time; no matter what.

Findings

How people perceive the world and in an open source web system / Joomla implementation in particular: how people see results in the context of what is agreed. We need to elaborate on Findings a bit more because synchronization of Findings is the key to a valuable contract management.

FINDINGS

Findings are complex. We might have conflicting interests, personal issues versus the roles we play. Different levels of expertise and experience. How well were negotiations perceived. What about respect? Did parties involved that wrote their Findings receive enough respect from others and give enough respect to others during the process? All these factors influence the way we perceive things.

Example: An emotional quarrel with your neighbor hardly ever has to do with the subject or object at hand. Most likely it's something else that formed their opinion, expressed in a sort of "Findings".

HOUSEHOLD PSYCHOLOGY ONE-ON-ONE

Let's also have a quick look at some important psychological effects while doing business. In case of an open source web system implementation, we stumble upon a few interesting effects that have a major impact.

What a customer really wants

Cover and future proof advice. That is it, folks. He/she is not interested in open source, Joomla, you, your product, your measures, your vision, etc. So stop telling them dumb stories and start asking smart questions to secure them in what they really want.

The declining value of service

Everything that is already done, is worth less every following day and everything that needs to be done is very important and urgent. Does it ring a bell?

Always right

A customer is always right. If not, we just have a different opinion on the subject... That is a good example of what synchronization of Findings is all about.

DEADLINE FIRST FLEX SCOPE

Projects tend to go over the deadline. Why? Are you such a crappy planner, do you like to disappoint people? Of course not. Do you end up with a buggy result to has to be debugged, do you accept new requirements and changed resources while you are developing? Yes, you do. Do you have a problem stopping development efforts and starting a thorough test? Do you deliver

half-baked systems just to "keep the customer happy"? You most probably do. And you should stop this behavior from this moment on.

"Deadline first" means: no matter what, we deliver on time. Read that sentence again: we deliver on time.

40 years of ICT has done us no good in some perspectives. It's perfectly accepted that we don't deliver on time. Even worse: it's accepted that more than 50% of the larger ICT projects world wide are a sheer failure. And we accept that they tend to be twice as expensive in the end than quoted upfront.

Suppose your grocery store would say "no milk today" after you ordered it by phone yesterday. Suppose your bakery would raise their prices from one day to the other by 100% or 200%. What would you say if the constructor of your house that just collapsed sends you the last invoice for "work done to your house"?

Customers in ICT just walk off and mumble their disdain. They go and start another ICT project. And we suppliers? We get away with nonperformance! We don't deliver on time, we don't stick to promises and we deliver systems that will not be used (long enough). Sometimes a customer sues us. But what the heck: you can't get blood from a stone. In many cases, angry customers don't pay the last installment or the main installment (depends on how stupid we were). But that's about it. Easy walk in the park. We continue to next project and act more or less the same...

STOP IT!

Deliver on time, no matter what, no excuses, but deliver!

HOW TO DELIVER ON TIME

I will now go into detail about how it's done and the positive effects of this behavior for all parties involved, including your customers.

How do you deliver on time?

Most importantly by flexing the scope.

The Basecamp-company 37signals⁷⁶ writes in their visionary guidebook *Getting Real*⁷⁷: open source (and also Joomla) web systems are very well equipped to stick to this rule. (Read the full book for other good rules)

1. Open source has good prototyping & Proof of Concept capabilities, scope gets clearer "after" prototyping and thus scope changes.

⁷⁶ <http://37signals.com/>

⁷⁷ <http://gettingreal.37signals.com/>

2. An Open source web system has extensive and useful hidden functionality on board, loads of change available (see also Negotiate continuously)
3. Scope should be flexible because customers change their mind on what they want, after experiencing first results and possibilities. Customers learn on the job. And change their mind accordingly. Scope creep is the negative effect, "flex scope" the positive solution.

This is the step-by-step:

Agree upfront that you put deadline first and flex the scope to meet the deadline. Explain honestly what "flex scope" means. Lets call the customers "they". Be very open: what they want now, they don't get in the end. Why not? Why not? Advancing insight will eventually lead to different systems! However they do get what they want in every iteration towards the end result.

Be sure to be in charge of flexing the scope (no discussion, you have to meet the deadline, so you're the one that makes decisions after touching base.

Plan a time buffer in your work towards a deadline. Use the buffer to flex the scope and make an new version of your release plan. Do that by diminishing the number of functionality-blocks in the current sprint, slim down functionality-blocks.

Manage possible frustration of customers

Never write off a functionality block yourself. Place it in a next sprint or in SprintX.

Communicate the flex scope action with a new Release plan

Stick to priorities in the Findings so far and write down every single remark (no duplicates) or new wish explicitly.

BE FIRM BUT SYMPATHETIC

Main firm stands:

1. Never ever accept a fixed price contract again. Or make a ridiculous margin on top of your quote. Open source web system development and implementation is just not suited to offer and work with a fixed price. Explore 2Value's alert system⁷⁸ as a balanced alternative in between fixed price and "Carte Blanche".
2. Stick to the rules of engagement: payments overdue? Stop work right away, no exceptions.
3. Professionalism: start to offer it by demanding it.

Sympathetic behavior accompanied with a firm stand

1. A: Always say and write: We "can't" instead of "we don't want to" or "we won't".

Example: I am sorry sir, I am afraid I can't continue staging your site to production. The partial payment has not arrived in our bank account. It's company policy to proceed only if due payments have arrived in our bank account.

⁷⁸ <http://wiki.2value.nl/index.php?title=Piepsysteem/en>

2. B: Say you can't start this server virus-fix analysis before the money has arrived in the bank account, but let the customer "feel" that your back office has already taken measures and is full on the job of analyzing & fixing the bug.
3. C: A support contract is hardly ever a result insurance. Support on webCMS's, especially those based on open source can only be a guided effort insurance. That means: at the most we promise reaction, response and resolve times and capacity available in the required expertise.

Don't introduce this result responsibility of customers site on your business' shoulder. They can't bear it. The load of several million lines of code... someone else's code. Code running on a contentiously changing stack that's attacked by scoundrels every day (hackers).

Remember: Before the customer first rang your door bell, their site was never your problem. Keep that in mind and remind your customer. Some of these customers think they can buy your commitment, devotion, hiring you as a templater for a few hours.... And some of you act like sinners right away when a customer is in great distress and quick to point the finger at you because of a non-operating web system. Again: behave like a professional and they will respect you as a professional. Behave like a low grade assistant, they will treat you as a doormat.

A webCMS is the customers problem and we can assist by improving it and helping out when problems occur. It is not your problem. Comprendo? Tiny difference, huge effect. Only watch the tone of voice.

Having said (and repeated) that, you work your ass off to help this customers web shop to go live again before the rush of Christmas shopping.

- D: We do deliver exactly what was agreed (no rebate for nothing), but we "put in the extra mile" too.

SELL AND NEGOTIATE CONTINUOUSLY

It's obvious that you have to sell a project and negotiate conditions (among them "price"). What is new to many people is that in a web system development project or the support afterwards, you have to sell and negotiate continuously.

A few examples:

- Is it done? Can I send my invoice now? ("No, there is still a few issues left to improve...")
- Support request: change a logo on the site. How much time do you need? ("Ooh, come on you can't be serious!...")
- You think it is extra work, your customer doesn't seem to think so. ("It might not be in the RFP, but I remember very well us discussing this functionality")

Remember that sales is game. The customer should have the overall feeling that he/she won that game. Give them that feeling and be well-off with the deal at the same time!

To be able to play a game of marbles, you'll need marbles.

How do you get marbles? By signing the contract? No. By sending invoices? No no. By holding back results. Sometimes...

The main source of credits for your sales game are happiness and money. Don't mix them.

- Build up credits in the emotional bank account of your relations (See Steven R. Covey⁷⁹). Solve frustration you might have; you need to be happy in the work relation too!
- If partial payments have arrived on time, you have credits for new games.
- Refrain from having too many service hours unpaid. It makes you vulnerable and clears the way for customers to put you under pressure and/or reopen negotiations. The more they owe you, the more they might throw in these bullshit arguments to not proceed and pay you. Inappropriate pressure is coming down on you. But you caused it yourself in the first place. (See: be firm but sympathetic)

DEFINE ROLES AND PLAY THEM!

A customer has several broadly accepted roles: the boss, the end user, the administrator of the web system, and most important he/she is the judge.

As a literal 'sole' proprietary holder you stand alone as the supplier of the web system. You have to deliver the system: good, suitable, well documented, within time, within budget en reliable. How fair is that?

Well, that's not fair at all! Lets have a closer look at what is happening here.

Suppose you ooze that "do it all and liking it" attitude. You get questions like:

"Would you advice us to use Joomla?"

and

"Could PHP do the backup cycle for us"

and

"Is it possible to get multilingual support in time?".

Nothing wrong with these questions, right? How often did you answer them?...without realizing that you just loaded the barrels of a shotgun pointed at you.

Suppose you answer these questions with "Yes", and refined the answer. That's very nice of you! You know a lot! The respect you get originates from the fact that you're not only a good developer, but also:

- have a very sharp vision on how the selection process should be;

⁷⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Covey

- feel acquainted and safe with the LAMP stack and cronjob-mechanism and you fix it (woow!)
- that the international open source community and especially a web CMS Joomla is a sort of homecoming for you; you know a lot of people, anywhere in the world....

'What a man, what a man, what a talented man.

No idea where we're heading? Hold on and "no worries", these are just harmless examples to get you to understand the risks of being foolishly responsive.

Lets pull the trigger of the shotgun pointed at you. Remember that it was you that loaded the ammunition:

- Now wait a minute, you advised Joomla and now we have to program tailor-made code that might solve the issue that Drupal does out of the box?!...'
- Every night we expected to have a safe copy of our website, because you said PHP was capable of doing it. We paid you to configure the cronjob. And now we ended up with a useless restore..."
- You promised multilingual support and now we have to pay for it?"

Where did the respect go that you counted on? Why does this customer behave like this? It's obvious that the customer is angry and I guess you have to work for free to make her or him happy again! So what's your best bet, pal?

What went wrong? A few elementary things in conducting professional business. And please don't lull yourself to sleep with

oh, no but I'm just a small firm, a creative entrepreneur, and my customers are small. I do not need this.

A few elementary and universal things in conducting professional business went wrong:

- You didn't separate your different talents in distinctive roles. Symbolize them by different colored caps. So from now on: define roles.
- You didn't put on the right caps while answering the questions. That made you vulnerable: the customer can take your answer from any point of view. Play your role!

HOW DO YOU DEFINE ROLES?

You don't have to. Definitions are readily available, just choose a set of roles that match your business and communicate them. Put them in writing and make your customer acquainted with the various roles you play professionally. Examples: account manager, consultant, contract manager, project manager, designer, developer, tester, content-builder, hoster.

A customer or its representative will only abuse you playing 10 roles at a time IF YOU ALLOW THEM TO.

To be safe and sound. Use these roles explicitly at all important times and play them.

I am sorry, ms. customer, as your developer I could never answer your "should we use Joomla" question. The reason is your organization has to choose a webCMS and I can make the best of it. Of course I can connect you with mr. colleague_of_mine, he is consultant at our company and specialized in selection-processes. His fee is very reasonable compared to the coverage of corporate risks he covers with his advice.

PHP for the backup cycle. As a contract manager I would have to say 'no' to you, because a backup procedure is out of scope. As a project manager I'm afraid I have to give you the same answer for a different reason: we are busy in this sprint reaching the deadline, we haven't planned it and I don't have the backup routine in the release plan as a listed functionality that I have to fulfill. As a developer I would say: yes, doable. But the alarm bells go off in my office as a hoster: first the characteristics of the restore should be clear before we could invent a suitable back-up strategy. You see, there are many ways of looking at this simple question.

Multilingual support in time? You have to be more specific to avoid disappointment in the near future. I could say Yes to you, because it's easy to install a translation module. That's my development cap. But somebody has got to do the translations as well. And that could be me in a different role, different cap: translator/configurator. If you expect 'Multilingual support' to be localized content, I would have to perform a task that I am not able to: I am not a native speaker of the foreign language that you focus at and I'm not a citizen that lives locally in that region. Whether or not I can perform the tasks in time that I am capable of doing, depends on the planning. I have to take a look at that next Thursday when I have my project management-day.

This all might seem a silly play, but it is dead serious business.

Tactics

Example: interaction design

Your tomorrow's user interaction design session with the customer will be easier if someone else (but on behalf of you) mentioned the cascade of your legal steps against him, as long as invoices remain unpaid. You could tap the customer's arm and say "please do not be to angry on him, he just doing his job. We can not blame him, can we?" The customer will respect him for his and yours professionalism. Image how hard it is to play these roles all by yourself.

- To avoid backfire on your personal relationship with your customer you could "introduce your real colleagues" (individuals). Real colleagues (even if they do not know that they are your colleague) are very good to have around, you can:

- a. blame them

- b. praise them for their excellent work in his/hers role
- To postpone and divert: answer the question in one or two roles right away, but then park as an agenda-item for a different role on the critical path. Example given: "Yes, technically no problem, but I have to take a look at that next Thursday when I have my project management-day."
- Invent a diversion yourself. It's nothing to be ashamed of. In business it is done every day. Ask yourself the question "Does it sound as an excuse?" It shouldn't. It should be a "role well played".

Revisited

The 4 interdependent rules of earning respect and money in your work as an open source expert revisited:

- Deadline first, flex scope
- Be firm but sympathetic
- Sell en negotiate continuously
- Define roles and play them

See?!: **Earning respect and money with Joomla! has nothing to do with Joomla!.**

(Thanks to Froukje Frijlink who checked my English).

Chapter 25

Resources

This book was a beginning. I hope you enjoyed reading it. My intention was to guide you through Joomla! 1.6. Not everything was covered because that would have been too much.

I think we could use a developer book and a template designer book to dip deeper into these topics. Nobody knows what the future holds in store!

What kind of useful resources are there for you to learn more about Joomla! or to get in touch with the Joomla! community?

COMMUNITY

As it is written on the back of this book, Joomla! is backed by a worldwide community. If you like this idea, come and join us!

- Become a member of <http://community.joomla.org/>.
- Read the community magazine at <http://magazine.joomla.org/>.
- Maybe there is a Joomla! user group near you that you can join.
<http://community.joomla.org/user-groups.html>
If not, start one yourself!
- Twitter: <http://twitter.com/joomla>
- Facebook Group: <http://www.facebook.com/joomla>

DOCUMENTATION

- <http://docs.joomla.org/>

SECURITY CHECKLIST

- http://docs.joomla.org/Security_Checklist_1_-_Getting_Started

JOOMLA! EXTENSIONS

- The Joomla! extension directory provides more than 6,000 extensions - <http://extensions.joomla.org/>

JOOMLA! TEMPLATES

- There is no central directory for free templates.
- There is no central directory for commercial templates.

Anyway, there are a lot of template clubs and professionals that provide Joomla! templates. Just search the web and you will most certainly find something that suits you.

EVENTS

- Joomla! is known for its Joomla! days.
- A Joomla! day is a one- or two-day event organized by and for the community. A list of Joomla! days can be found here <http://community.joomla.org/events.htm>

There is an international Joomla! conference in Europe called *jandbeyond*. Go to <http://jandbeyond.org/> for more information.

THE FUTURE

- The community plans a six month release cycle, based on the ideas people post in the Joomla! idea pool.
- The next releases will be Joomla 1.7 in July 2011 and Joomla! 1.8 in January 2012, but of course, it depends on how the community will support implementing these ideas!
- The Joomla! developer network is always looking for people like you :-) <http://developer.joomla.org/>

TRAINING

- <http://resources.joomla.org/directory/support-services/training.html>

COMMERCIAL SUPPORT

- <http://resources.joomla.org/>

HOSTING

- <http://resources.joomla.org/directory/support-services/hosting.html>

CERTIFICATES

At the moment there is no possibility to get certified in Joomla!.

You see, there is enough work left for you, your friends and the rest of the world :-).

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The European educational projects focus on the promotion of lifelong learning with the goal of social integration. Particular emphasis is placed on learning methods in order to learn how to learn, the conception and realization of cross-generational learning strategies and local community development.

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