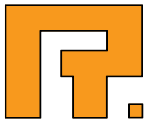

Roxen CMS 5.4

Forum Module Manual

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www.roxen.com

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1 Introduction

This document describes the installation, configuration and usage of the forum module. Understanding of the Access Control system is crucial when using this module and knowledge thereof is attained. Please refer to the CMS Admin manual if needed.

As always, if you have any suggestions, comments or complaints regarding these tutorials do not hesitate to send an email to manuals@roxen.com and if the issue is an obvious bug do not hesitate to report it to Bug Crunch, our bug tracking system.

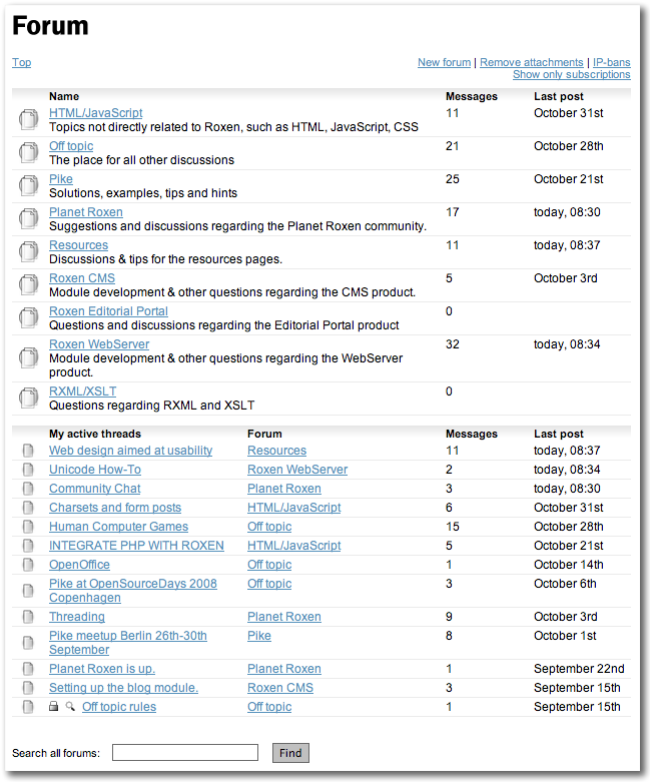

Figure 1. Forum module with some customization - http://planet.roxen.com/forum/

2 Installation

This chapter describes the basic features and the installation of the forum module.

2.1 Features

The forum module is a complete forum solution, managing everything from access control to moderation of threads. It supports numerous standard forum features:

- Two different ways of threading
- Moderation of forums & threads
- A system for subscriptions
- Answer and quote functions

These and many more features makes up a module that can be used out of the box or be modified for your forum needs.

2.2 Installing the module

- Add module *CMS: Forum*.
- Optionally create a new zone where all new protections points will be created and change the *AC Zone* setting in the module to this new zone. Otherwise future forum protection points will be created in the *Common* zone.
- If the site is being upgraded from a version prior to 3.4.57-release2 you have to update the top-level XSLT stylesheet cms-components.xsl to import the file `/roxen-files/cms-templates/applications.xsl` instead of the `/roxen-files/cms-templates/cms-components.xsl` template.
- Create a page on the site containing the tag `<forum/>` and access the page at least once to have the forum initialize database tables and create the first protection point.
- Go to the *Access Control* page and give administrators (yourself) write permission to the protection class 'Forum Administration'. You should now be able to create new forums on the forum page.

2.3 Installation notes

To install the forum module you need a license that allows you to do so. The second step is to add the modules needed. To do this you need access to the administration interface for your server.

The easiest way to add the forum module to a site is to select the site from the list on the *Sites* tab and then click the *Add module*-button. This will bring up a screen listing all modules installed in the server. Write the word *"forum"* in the search box. This should result in a hit on the forum module. Add it to your site.

The module will be added with default settings, a database for storing data will be created. Customization of these settings will be covered later in this document.

3 Setup

This section covers the basic setup of the forum module and it's components.

3.1 Access Control

The Forum Administration protection point controls permissions to create new forums. The permissions for each forum is controlled by two protection points:

Forum: 'Forum name' compose

Permissions to this protection point either hides the forum completely (none), gives the user ability to only read existing messages (read) or gives the user permission to write new messages (write) in the forum.

Forum: 'Forum name' admin

Permissions to this protection point controls moderate/administrate permission. If the user has read permission to this protection point it means that she can remove messages or complete threads. If the user has write permission to this protection point it means that she also can change the name/description of the forum or remove the forum.

3.2 Admin Settings

There are a couple of settings to manage in the administration interface.

Forum Database

This setting lets you choose another database to use for storing user added content and other data for the forum module. The module will automatically create a default database to use when you add it to your site. This default setting works well in most cases, however this setting is useful in some cases, such as backend- and acceleration server environments etcetera.

AC Zone

Here you can choose in which AC-zone the module will create its protection points. Protection points are automatically added according to where users add new forums. If you have a lot of forums in place it might be a good idea to change this setting to a zone especially for the forum protection points.

Enable hot threads

Mark threads with a lot of activity as hot treads. There are settings for which threads that qualify to be marked on the *Hot Threads*-tab.

Enable forbidden words filter

The forum features a forbidden words filter that reacts to a set of words of your choice. Enable the feature by selecting *Yes* from the drop down menu and fill in the words you would like to mark as forbidden in the textbox on the *Forbidden words*-tab.

Max posts in thread

Enables you to control how many posts that goes in a thread before it automatically gets locked. Threads locked by this feature can be unlocked by an administrator, in the same way manually locked threads are handled.

Upload file size limit

Fill in this box to set the size limit in bytes for uploaded files.

Enable logging of events

This enables the logging functionality of the forum module, creates a new table in the database for logging of activities on the forum.

Abuse auto hide

You may choose to automatically hide messages when they have been reported as abuse from a number of unique hosts. Input the number of reports in this field. Set it to zero to disable the feature.

Priority

Same as for all other modules, this setting has to do with the way the server executes the code from different modules.

4 Using the Forum

This section is a short guide to how you use the forum as a normal user and as an administrator. Many of the features are self explanatory, therefore we will only cover the most important ones.

4.1 Basic navigation

Again the forum is of quite simple nature. Navigation should not be a problem but let's look through the obvious.

The first view presented to users (visiting the basic page containing the *forum*-tag) is an overview of all sub-forums in the system. The user then navigates down a forum and is provided with a list of all available threads. Clicking a thread will of course show a list of posts in that thread.

The forum automatically creates navigation breadcrumbs displayed at the top of every page. These can be used to jockey about on the forum. They also provide a good overview of the current position.

4.2 Setting up forums

After you have installed the module and made the necessary settings you need a page with the *forum*-tag. Make sure you are logged in as a user with administrative rights to the forum and visit the above mentioned page. You will now be presented with a first view of the forum.

You now need to add forums to allow the users to post and create threads. This is done by clicking the *New Forum*-link. This will give you a new page containing three text boxes. Fill in the name of the new forum in the top box, a description of the forum in the second and a comma separated list of moderators in the bottom one. Hit the *Create*-button and your forum will be created for you.

4.3 Starting a new thread

Starting a new thread is done by clicking the link in the forum view labelled New Thread. This will give you a form in which you fill in a topic and your message. Hit *Preview* to get an instant view of the post as it would appear on the forum. Hit *Post Message* to create the thread.

Replying to a post works using similar forms. By default, each message in a thread has a link to such a form.

4.4 Forum Administration

Administrators of the forum have some rights not provided to regular users, besides the ability to create new forums as described above. Standard features like moving, coping, deleting moderating and locking threads are accessed from the thread views.

Every post in a thread has an array of links to functions for editing, deleting and hiding that are exclusive for administrators.

5 Administration

This chapter describes the basics of altering the look, feel and the functions of the forum module. Knowledge of templates, RXML and other Roxen concepts might be needed.

5.1 Template system

The forum application are built by a set of RXML tags and three different files: One RXML application file, one XSL template and a glue file acting as a bridge between the two.

The main tag `<forum>` is inserted on a page where its resulting output is the complete forum application.

When `<forum>` is parsed it first defines a few variables and then parses the RXML application file given by the `rxml-file` attribute. The RXML code in this file is executed each request and should contain all dynamic elements of the page.

At the top of the RXML file there is a special tag `<forum-main>` that parses the RXML - XSL glue file. The glue file defines a number of tags that contains the result of an XSL transform of the corresponding template rule in the template file.

5.2 Customization

To make changes to the layout you can override the rules in `/roxen-files/cms-templates/forum/forum-layout.xsl` in a file where you first import `forum-layout.xsl` and then redefines the things you want to change. Then copy `/roxen-files/cms-templates/forum/forum.xsl` and change template-file for the `<forum>` tag to your own forum-layout file. Also import this file in `/cms-components.xsl`.

6 Internal Tags

This section describes the important tags provided by the forum module.

6.1 Forum

The forum module is quite simple when it comes to internal tags. It more or less boils down to one tag worth mentioning. Namely the forum-tag.

```
<forum/>
```

6.1.1 Attributes

rxml-file="path" (/roxen-files/cms-templates/forum/forum.xml)

Allows you to provide a path to an alternative RXML application file.

template-file="path" (/roxen-files/cms-templates/forum/forum-layout.xsl)

Allows you to provide a path to an alternative template file.

glue-file="path" (/roxen-files/cms-templates/forum/forum-glue.xml)

Allows you to provide a path to an alternative RXML-XSLT glue file.

id="string" ("")

Optional unique identifier for a forum, making it possible to have several groups of forums with separated access control and tables in the database. Each time a new ID-string is encountered new tables and an administration protection point will be created.

Default ID is the empty string.