



F r o m T e c h n o l o g i e s t o S o l u t i o n s

Building Websites with

XOOPS

A step-by-step tutorial

Get your XOOPS website up fast using this easy-to-follow guide

Steve Atwal

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BIRMINGHAM - MUMBAI

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Since 1997, Steve has been helping the University of British Columbia to improve the Information Technology infrastructure for two large departments. To this end, he has been developing IT policies and procedures, capacity planning, chairing and participating in various committees for IT initiatives, preparing for disaster recovery using virtualization technologies, and ensuring that high security of all servers, desktops, and networks is enforced.

Steve chose XOOPS because of its feature set, expandability, and ease of use. You can contact him and leave some comments on his blog (www.steveatwal.com).

I wish to thank my daughter Alisha, who has a young and tender heart, for her playful distractions that refueled and energized me; and our Friday night dinner and movie. I would also like to thank my family and friends who have provided endless encouragement, especially Navi, Jinder, and Lek. I will not easily forget my recent trip to London – thanks Navi! I would also like to thank Michael LeBlanc who has been a good friend with his technical advice, code input, and reviews.

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And, of course, I would like to thank you, the readers. I hope you enjoy this book and send me some feedback on my blog!

About the Reviewers

Marc-André Lanciault is a Business Management bachelor with specialization in Information Systems. For the last few years, Marc-André has been actively involved in the open-source world, especially in XOOPS open-source content management system.

He is the leader and founder of The SmartFactory (<http://smartfactory.ca>), a development team that produces high-quality modules for XOOPS. The SmartFactory has acquired a solid reputation among the community for its complex and flexible, yet easy-to-use modules. Thousands of XOOPS webmasters have adopted one or many of the SmartModules, making The SmartFactory the leader in XOOPS modules development.

Marc-André is also the co-founder of Montreal-based INBOX International (<http://inboxinternational.com>) specializing in personalized web solutions. As Canada's leading expert on XOOPS, INBOX International is providing state-of-the-art expertise to organizations around the globe that have adopted this content management system.

On a more personal level, Marc-André is the lucky father of a handsome little 22-months boy named Félix.

Michael Hokamp's first experience with computing was in 1985, when he tried to figure out how to get his AMIGA to work as intended. During the next ten years he got used to computers driven by Microsoft with Office applications such as Word and Excel. During that time, he took his first steps in the World Wide Web, beginning to explore the virtual world, and creating websites for himself, friends, and family.

He started to work with content management solutions in 2000. In 2002, after experience with some of the available open-source CMS, he began to use XOOPS and dug deeper into CSS and XHTML. As a webmaster, he used tools on servers and webspaces to communicate with clients and visitors.

Michael lives in Germany with his two twin boys and wife, and runs the <http://xoopsfactory.com> website.

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Preface

XOOPS is an open-source web content management system, written in PHP. It allows site administrators to easily create dynamic websites with great content and many outstanding features, with a minimum of coding. It's great for creating small to large dynamic community websites, intra-company portals, and much more. It has a large, enthusiastic, and helpful community of users.

If you want to create a powerful, fully-featured website in no time, this book is just for you. This book will help you explore XOOPS, putting you in the picture of what it offers, and how to go about building a site with the system.

You will be introduced to the main components of XOOPS, and learn how to manage them. You will develop the skills and the confidence to manage all types of content on the site, and also understand how users interact with the site. As you find your way round, your own ideas for what you need in your new website will begin to crystallize around what you can see about the capabilities and flexibility of XOOPS.

What This Book Covers

The book begins with an overview of XOOPS, its history, and its community.

Chapter 2 shows you how to set up a local development environment for running XOOPS, and also what needs to be done before you can install XOOPS to have a live, public-facing, website. Once your development environment is set up, the chapter shows you how to get XOOPS installed and working.

Chapter 3 takes you through the basic configuration of your XOOPS installation, to get all the site details correct, and make sure your site is hooked up to a mail server for important notifications.

Chapter 4 covers many of the administration tasks that you will perform while managing your site. You will see how to manage users and groups, add and activate new modules, add and position blocks, and manage banners and images among other things.

Chapter 5 introduces XOOPS themes, which control the look and feel of your site. You will see what a theme is, and how to install and modify an existing XOOPS theme to customize it to your needs. You will also get started with creating a brand-new XOOPS theme.

There are many modules available for extending the functionality of XOOPS. In *Chapter 6*, we cover a number of the most popular modules available from the XOOPS website, and explore their installation and use. We will look at modules for tasks like handling news, calendars, creating an image gallery and a forum, and also adding a sitemap to your site to improve its accessibility to search engines.

Chapter 7 demonstrates the use of the IntranetPack, a free package available from www.xoops.org. This package contains some commonly used modules that can be used to put together a company portal. The chapter will walk you through each of these modules to give you a working intranet.

Conventions

In this book, you will find a number of styles of text that distinguish between different kinds of information. Here are some examples of these styles, and an explanation of their meaning.

There are three styles for code. Code words in text are shown as follows: "The header and footer sections can be changed using the `main theme.html` and `style.css` files."

A block of code will be set as follows:

```
<ul id="nav">
<li class="first"><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/">Home</a></li>
<li><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/modules/mydownloads/">Files</a></li>
<li><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/modules/xoopsfaq/">FAQ</a></li>
<li><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/modules/contact/">Contact Us</a></li>
<li class="last"><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/modules/newbb/">Forums</
a></li>
</ul>
```

When we wish to draw your attention to a particular part of a code block, the relevant lines or items will be made bold:

```
<tr>
  <td></td>
  <td class="obNavWidth" ><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/">HOME</a></td>
  <td width="22" ><img src=
    "<{$xoops_imageurl}>/images/na_1.png" alt="" /></td>
  <td class="obNavWidth" >
    <a href="<{$xoops_url}>/modules/mydownloads/">DOWNLOADS</a></td>
  <td width="22" ><img src=
    "<{$xoops_imageurl}>/images/na_1.png" alt="" /></td>
```

New terms and **important words** are introduced in a bold-type font. Words that you see on the screen, in menus or dialog boxes for example, appear in our text like this: "Click on the link for **English** under **Languages** on the left-hand side of the page."



Warnings or important notes appear in a box like this.



Tips and tricks appear like this.

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1

Overview of XOOPS

Before you can learn to use XOOPS, you need to know what it is, why you should use it, and what the future holds for this CMS (content management system).

What is XOOPS?

Before we delve into XOOPS, let's ask a related question: what is a web-based content management system (or CMS)? Such a system is available to anyone with sufficient permission to access it over the Internet using just a web browser. And, this kind of system allows us to manage websites and web content such as text, images, sounds, videos, and animations. There is a wide array of content management systems, each hoping to fill some special need. The market is fragmented, and there seems to be little in the way of standards in the way content is served or managed. There are many open-source solutions and almost as many proprietary commercial solutions. However, a few of these systems stand out above the rest; XOOPS is one such open-source content management system.

So, why do you need a web content management system? One of the biggest advantages of using such a system is that it allows collaborative management of content. In other words, content can be added and changed by many different people, and granular permissions can be assigned to limit who can change and manage which content.

This book will show you how to use some common features of the XOOPS content management system. XOOPS is a fairly easy-to-use system and we will provide a tutorial-type introduction to it.

In terms of the technology used, XOOPS is a set of programs written in PHP. Together, these programs allow you to manage content (such as text, images, audio, or video), which is stored on a web server, using a web browser.

A more formal definition of XOOPS, from the Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org>), is:

"XOOPS is a content management system that allows administrators to easily create dynamic websites. It is a tool for developing small to large dynamic community websites. It is written in PHP and interfaces with a database such as MySQL."

What this means is that you can share your information with other employees, friends, and prospective buyers. The medium for sharing this information is the Internet.

XOOPS is released under the GNU General Public License (GPL), which gives you the right to use it freely, to modify it to suit your needs and then to redistribute it under the terms of the GPL. XOOPS is pronounced as "zoo'ps".

The name XOOPS is an acronym of "eXtensible Object-Oriented Portal System". The word "portal" hints at the original intent of the software as a portal system, but XOOPS is striving to meet the ideals of a true content management system.

The XOOPS Foundation is the umbrella group under which XOOPS is developed and maintained, and under which a number of teams are managed. Some of these teams are the following:

- Core Development Team, responsible for the maintenance and further development of the XOOPS core code.
- Module Development Team, responsible for the maintenance and further development of the XOOPS official modules that come with the full package.
- Theme Design Team, responsible for running and supporting Theme Design and development for the XOOPS system.
- QA (Quality Assurance) Team, responsible for quality-assurance testing of modules.
- Documentation Team, responsible for the preparation and addition of introductory manuals, reference guides, tutorials, and technical documents.
- Marketing and Communications Team, responsible for external marketing, communications, and visibility of XOOPS.
- Support-Forum Moderation Team, responsible for helping the XOOPS community and new users solve common problems by ensuring that each issue reaches the appropriate team.
- XOOPS Core Team, comprising team leaders of all the other teams, which is responsible for the "Big Picture", ensuring that the work of all the teams comes together to make XOOPS a more cohesive product.

Why XOOPS?

If you take a quick look at the popular "try before you use" website www.opensourcecms.com (where you can test-drive a CMS before you install it to manage your own website), you will notice that many open-source content management systems exist. It is interesting to know what sets XOOPS apart from the others. Let us first see what other CMS software is available that is comparable to XOOPS. The following table illustrates this:

CMS	License	URL
Drupal	GPL	www.drupal.org
Joomla	GPL	www.joomla.org
Typo3	GPL	www.typo3.org

XOOPS is comparable with these systems, but the combination of ease of use and the number of applications or plug-in modules available for it make it a compelling choice. In addition, XOOPS provides a complete development API (Application Programming Interface) for anyone wanting to extend the functionality of the base system. XOOPS has multi-language support, site-wide search, and built-in support for banner advertising. There are even some e-commerce modules available if you wish to create an online store.

There are some really good reasons to use XOOPS, such as:

- Ease of installation. The web-based installation is quick and painless.
- Simple web-based administration of users and the website interface.
- Multiple output formats, such as RSS feeds, which allow users to check for new content on your site without having to open up a web browser.
- Workflow is supported by modules that have a submit, review, and approve process.
- Enterprise-level user authentication is supported using LDAP.

Want to take your corporate data online? Want to start a business online? Want to share your family photos with relatives scattered around the world? Want to share information on your hobbies? Want to collaborate on projects with other like-minded people but they are too far away for you to meet in person?

XOOPS allows you to do all of the above, and much more. If you are willing to learn to program using PHP, then what you can do with XOOPS is limited only by your imagination. However, you do not need to know PHP in order to manage your web content; but a little knowledge of HTML would be handy.

Is XOOPS right for you? There are many CMS and blogging systems that are freely available. What you need to consider is the purpose of your website. XOOPS is for you if you want:

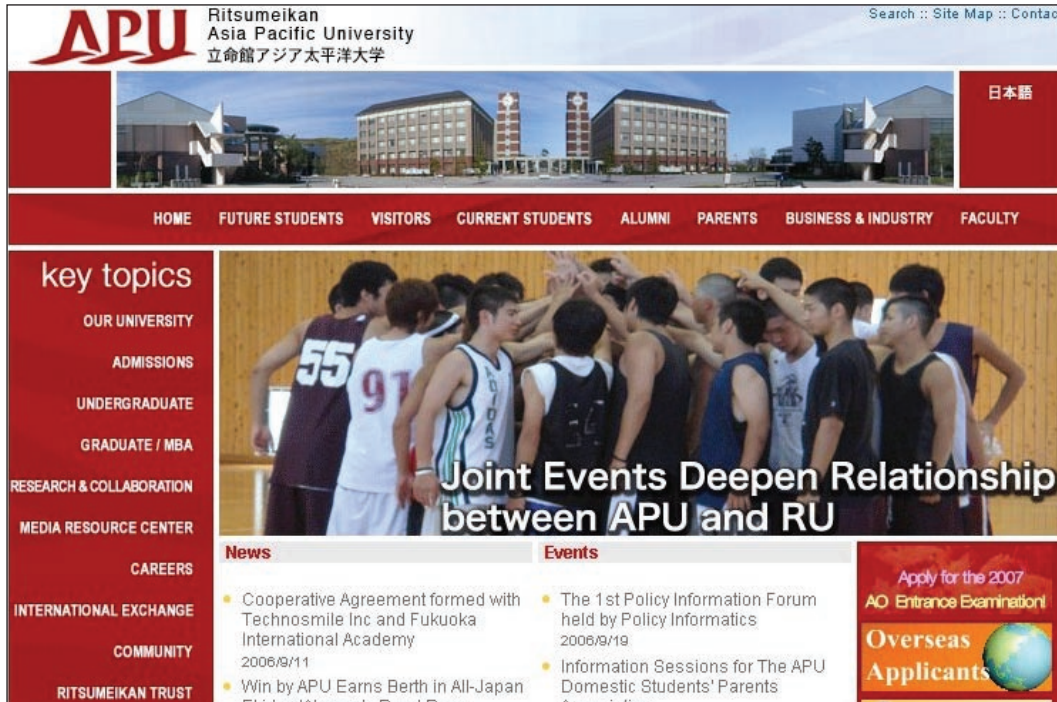
- A portal, a collaboration and feedback website, static and dynamic information sharing.
- Plug-in features, such as an upload/download area, a calendar, a polling area for feedback from users, and an image gallery.
- Easy personalization of the website, to allow you to change the look and feel of the website without a lot of work.
- Presentation of content of different types and technologies.
- Subscription to information on your website using technologies such as RSS (Really Simply Syndication) that allows users to consolidate their information gathering needs in a central location without visiting your website.
- Easy web-based methods of adding additional features and performing maintenance of older information.

Following are some example websites that use XOOPS. This shows the variety of content that can be served by XOOPS.

- Geek Web Talk, USA: Internet Marketing and Search Engine Optimization (<http://www.geekwebtalk.com>).



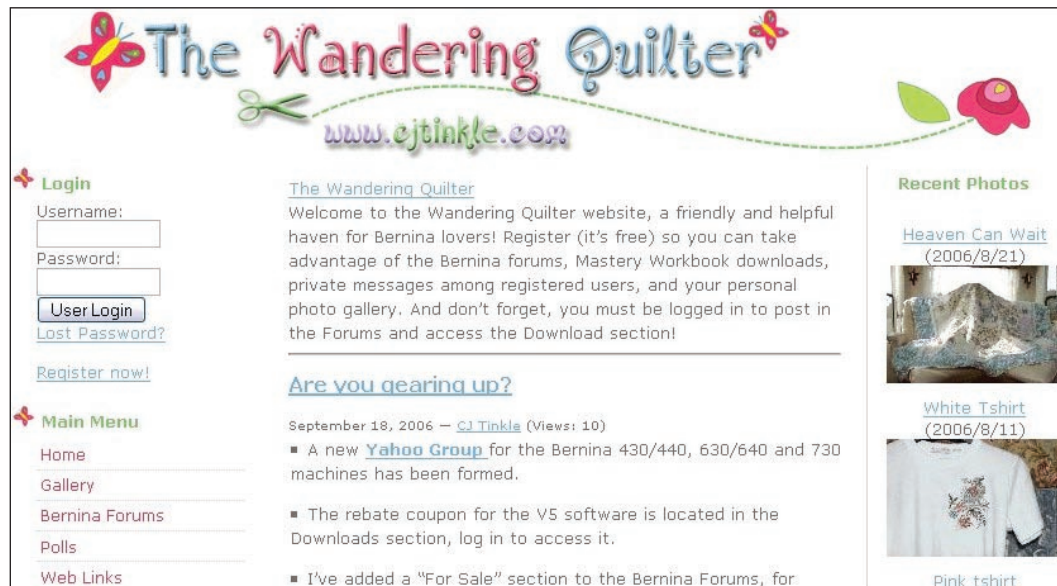
- Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan: A bi-lingual campus with students from over 80 nations (<http://www.apu.ac.jp>).



- InBox International, Canada: Web-development services and value-added expertise (<http://inboxinternational.com>).



- The Wandering Quilter: A site dedicated to Bernina embroidery (<http://cjtinkle.com/modules/wordpress/>).



There are many others. To see more examples of websites built using XOOPS, navigate to:

<http://xoopsfactory.com/modules/weblinks/index.php>

and the forums at the official website of XOOPS:

<http://www.xoops.org>.

Some Cautions

XOOPS is a rich content management system that can be used for many types of websites, depending on the features you need. It is database-driven, with support for both MySQL and PostgreSQL. XOOPS is modular, where new modules that provide additional functionality can be added, removed, activated, or deactivated easily using the web administration system. Registered users have access to change the appearance of some aspects of a XOOPS site, such as the look and feel (using themes). Administrators can send email to subscribed users, change the site language, and update user permissions.

However, there are some limitations of XOOPS, such as:

- Data repository is limited to MySQL and PostgreSQL. If you are using anything else, like Oracle or Microsoft SQL Server, then you are out of luck.
- There is no support for scalability or replication, other than replication provided by the database.
- XOOPS has no support for data import or data conversion. It is also not fully HTML/XHTML-compliant.
- There is no version control of documents, or rollback of changes.
- There is no WYSIWYG editing for users.
- There is no facility to manage a large number of users other than the web interface, and that becomes unsuitable for more than a small user base.

Despite these shortcomings, which may be addressed in future releases of the XOOPS system, there is plenty to like about XOOPS. Just be aware that if any of the above are a must have for you, then XOOPS may not be the right tool for your needs.

Past and Future of XOOPS

XOOPS has evolved from several products. First there was ThatWare, a Slash clone written in PHP. Then PHPNuke came along and was written on top of ThatWare. PHPNuke was written in PHP and used MySQL for a database.

For various reasons, many of the PHPNuke developers decided to create a new version of PHPNuke and named it PostNuke; one of the reasons stated was that the developers wanted to address the security concerns of PHPNuke. However, some criticisms of PostNuke are that the developers change the APIs too frequently and that PostNuke is too heavy on computer processing power. PostNuke has in turn created a new branch, first called LostNuke and then Xaraya, created by some of the key developers of PostNuke.

XOOPS appears to be an object-oriented rewrite of PHPNuke. The XOOPS development teams believe that a system that uses objects is more secure and easier to develop and maintain.

More detailed information about upcoming XOOPS releases and the roadmap for XOOPS is available at <http://devteam.xoops.org>.

The XOOPS Community

The primary support and online XOOPS community can be found at <http://www.xoops.org/modules/newbb/>.

The XOOPS community is also localized for various countries with online support forums. For example, the local support groups for some countries are listed below:

- Netherlands: <http://xoops.jan304.org/modules/news/>
- France: <http://www.frxoops.org/>
- Japan: <http://xoops.jp/>

A complete list of the various local support groups can be found at <http://www.xoops.org/modules/xoopspartners/>.

Summary

XOOPS is a versatile content management system. Although it does have its limitations, it can serve you well in many cases. We have pointed out what XOOPS is, its shortcomings and benefits, and where to get help if you get stuck. If you decide that XOOPS is for you, then read on and we will show you how to start using it.

2

Installing XOOPS

Every software program requires installation, and XOOPS is no different. We will cover what is required before you can install XOOPS for both a local and hosted installation, and then show you how to set up a fully functional website with a default XOOPS configuration. To install XOOPS, you need four components:

- **Apache**, the web server that will serve the HTML and PHP web pages
- **PHP**, the programming language that XOOPS requires
- **MySQL**, a SQL database to store the XOOPS data, user IDs, passwords, etc.
- **XOOPS**, a suite of programs/web framework written in PHP that we shall use to build and manage our website

Creating the Local Development Environment

You may want to play with XOOPS or test new functionality on your own PC before installing or updating your live website. To accomplish this, you need to know what software is required on your PC to get XOOPS up and running successfully.

If you are running Windows on your PC, like most people, then you should install XAMPP Lite, which will ensure that you have the required software before you attempt to install XOOPS. XAMPP Lite and the full XAMPP are used by many developers who wish to run web-based applications based on the popular PHP programming language. In fact, schools use this software when teaching PHP and Apache courses.

Before installing XAMPP Lite, make sure that you are logged into Windows with the administrator user ID or a user ID that has administrator privileges. If you don't know how to set these, look at the Windows **Help**.

If you are using Windows, then you can download XAMPP Lite for Windows from <http://www.apachefriends.org>.

In order to use all the features of XAMPP Lite, make sure that you either disable your Windows firewall or enable the following ports inside it; otherwise, the applications such as Apache and MySQL will not work:

- Port 80 for HTTP
- Port 443 for HTTPS (SSL)
- Port 3306 for MySQL

Although not required, enable the following ports if you intend to use the full version of XAMPP:

- Port 21 for FTP
- Port 25 for SMTP
- Port 110 for POP3
- Port 143 for IMAP
- Port 8009 for AJP/1.3
- Port 8080 for HTTP-ALT (Tomcat default port)

XAMPP Lite, which includes the following software, will install all the components you need for XOOPS:

- MySQL
- PHP
- Apache
- phpMyAdmin (to manage MySQL)
- OpenSSL, SQLite, eAccelerator (you may not need these but they are included)

Just extract the XAMPP Lite files, and run the `setup_xampp.bat` file to configure XAMPP Lite for use. Then run `apache_start.bat` and `mysql_start.bat` to get both Apache and MySQL operational. If you close the command windows that pop up, it will shutdown Apache and MySQL. So, just minimize them to keep them out of the way. XAMPP Lite makes no permanent changes to your computer and can be uninstalled easily by removing the XAMPP Lite folder.

```

C:\WINDOWS\system32\cmd.exe

#####
# ApacheFriends XAMPP Lite setup win32 Version 1.5
#
# Copyright (c) 2002-2005 ApacheFriends
#
# Authors: Kay Vogelgesang <kvo@apacheFriends.org>
#          Carsten Wiedmann <webmaster@wiedmann-online.de>
#
#####

Configure for server 1.5.4
Configure XAMPP with awk for 'Windows_NT'
Please wait ...
Enable AcceptEx Winsocks v2 support for NT systems  DONE!

##### Have fun with ApacheFriends XAMPP Lite! #####

Press any key to continue . . . _

```

To test to see if everything you need for XOOPS is operational, you need to see if Apache, PHP, and MySQL are operational. Just open your favorite web browser such as Mozilla Firefox and go to one of the following URLs: <http://localhost> or <http://127.0.0.1>.

If all is well, you should see the **XAMPP for Windows** welcome message, which may be in German! So click on the link for **English** under **Languages** on the left-hand side of the page. Click on the **Status** link on the top left and you will get another page that indicates the status of MySQL, PHP, HTTPS, and CGI.

XAMPP Status		
This page offers you on one view all information about what's running and working and what's not.		
Component	Status	Hint
MySQL database	ACTIVATED	
PHP	ACTIVATED	
HTTPS (SSL)	ACTIVATED	
Common Gateway Interface (CGI)	ACTIVATED	
Server Side Includes (SSI)	ACTIVATED	

Read the `readme_en.txt` file that came with XAMPP to get the user ID and password for MySQL; at the time of writing, the administrator user ID was root and the password was blank: not the type of insecure setup you would have for a live website. Use the **phpMyAdmin** link in the **Tools** section of the left navigation bar at <http://localhost> to create a new MySQL database for use by XOOPS. You will need this for the web-based installation of XOOPS.

To get more detailed information about the installed version of PHP, you can click on the **phpinfo()** link in the left navigation bar. However, just to show that PHP is now working fully within Apache on your test computer, let's create a file called `phpinfo.php` with the following PHP code in it and save it into the `\xampplite\htdocs` folder on your PC where you extracted the XAMPP Lite files:

```
<?php
// Show all information, defaults to INFO_ALL
phpinfo();
?>
```

Then, open your web browser and go to the following URL:

`http://localhost/xampp/phpinfo.php`

You should see a web page similar to the following, which means that you are ready to move on to the next step:

PHP Version 5.1.6	
	
System	Windows NT PORTA 5.1 build 2600
Build Date	Aug 23 2006 16:31:18
Configure Command	cscript /nologo configure.js "--enable-snapshot-build" "--with-gd=shared"
Server API	Apache 2.0 Handler
Virtual Directory Support	enabled
Configuration File (php.ini) Path	C:\Program Files\xampplite\apache\bin\php.ini
PHP API	20041225
PHP Extension	20050922
Zend Extension	220051025
Debug Build	no
Thread Safety	enabled
Zend Memory Manager	enabled
IPv6 Support	enabled
Registered PHP Streams	php, file, http, ftp, compress.zlib, https, ftps, zip
Registered Stream Socket Transports	tcp, udp, ssl, sslv3, sslv2, tls
Registered Stream Filters	convert.iconv.*, string.rot13, string.toupper, string.tolower, string.strip_tags, convert.*, consumed, zlib.*

Once you have Apache, PHP, and MySQL operational, all you have to do to start installing XOOPS is download the latest stable release of the XOOPS software from www.xoops.org, extract the contents of the **htdocs** folder inside the `XOOPS.zip` file into a folder within `\xampplite\htdocs` on your PC, such as `\xampplite\htdocs\mysite`, and then navigate to `http://localhost/mysite` to continue the web-based installation of XOOPS. The web-based installation of XOOPS from this point onwards is exactly the same for a local installation as when you are using an outside third-party web-host provider.

Creating a Development Environment on Linux

If you have Linux installed on your PC, then getting Apache, PHP, and MySQL is easy. You may already have these installed, but if not, then use the appropriate package manager for your version of Linux to install the missing software. Most likely, you will need to use either RPM or DEB packages. My favorite versions of Linux are Ubuntu and SUSE; installation of new packages in Ubuntu can be done easily in the console window using the following command:

```
apt-get install <package name>
```

For example,

```
apt-get install mysql
```

The downloading procedure for XOOPS is the same for both Windows and Linux. Since the web-based installation of XOOPS from this point onwards is exactly the same for a local installation as when you are using an outside third-party web-host provider, let us set up the requirements for the hosted live website before we show you how to use the web-based installation of XOOPS.

Preparing the Hosted Server for your Live Site

In order to make your website available to others on the Internet, you will need to either make your local installation of XOOPS accessible from outside your home network, or like most people, who have a website that must be operational all the time, sign up with a web-host provider and then install XOOPS on one of its servers. In this section, we will discuss what is required to prepare this outside web-host server before you can install XOOPS.

When you are ready to set up your live website, you will need to do a few things first:

- Register a domain name, e.g. `www.steveatwal.com`. This can be done either separately by paying for web-hosting or, as is recommended, by letting your web-hosting company take care of this for ease of future management and renewal. In fact, many web-hosting companies now include the cost of registering a domain name when you start a web-hosting plan. This leaves you with practically no reason for paying for it separately.
- Find and pay for web-hosting. You can find many web-hosting companies listed at web-hosting review sites such as <http://www.hostreview.com/>. Just search for **web-host reviews** on www.google.com to find many more. Note that many web-hosting companies allow you to register your domain name or transfer it from another company for free. Web-hosting is very cheap starting at less than \$7 US per month for 10 GB and more of space and lots of bandwidth (amount of data that can be transferred from the web-host to people who access your website). Bandwidth (or traffic) becomes very important if your website becomes popular or you plan to put a lot of audio or video content on your website. In addition, web-hosting companies are including the cost of registering a new domain name when you sign up for a year or more web-hosting plan. You need to shop around for the best deal. Some companies even give you SSH command-line access to their server, in case FTP is not sufficient to install a particular application.
- Write down the user ID and password you received from your web-hosting company. You will need these to transfer the XOOPS files onto its servers as well as creating a MySQL database and user ID for XOOPS.

Usually, when you sign up with a web-host, you get access to a web-based control panel such as cPanel that lets you configure Apache, MySQL, and the PHP parameters, as well as additional features such as creating sub-domains. For example, `games.steveatwal.com` is a sub-domain of `www.steveatwal.com` and both can have a fully functional XOOPS website independent of each other. This is what the control panel of your website would look like:

CPANEL 10

Welcome
Last login from:
Please update your contact information here.
Currently viewing default layout
[View Old Layout](#)

YAHOO!
Yahoo! Search Services
Get \$50 Free Advertising On Yahoo
No Strings Attached - [Click here](#)

General account information:

Hosting package	Platinum Pak
Account Expiration	375 days
Shared Ip Address	
Subdomains	5 / 20
Parked Domains	0 / 20
Addon Domains	0 / 5
MySQL Databases	8 / 50
Postgre Databases	0 / 50
Disk usage	1705.80 Megabytes
SQL Disk usage	9.17 Megabytes
Disk space available	13654.20 Megabytes
Bandwidth usage (current month)	111.99 Megabytes
Email Accounts	2 / 2500
Email Forwarders	2
Autoresponders	2
Mailing Lists	0 / 100
Email filters	0

Account Management

- Update Billing Info
- Renew Your Account
- Change Password

Domains

- Parked Domains
- Addon Domains
- Subdomains
- Register a Domain
- Transfer a Domain
- Domain Manager

Addons / Plugins

- Fantastico (Auto-Installs)
- CGI Center
- Chatroom
- PhpMyChat
- Agora Shopping Cart
- Retail Cart
- Accept Credit Cards
- Shopping Cart Gurus

Site Management

- Email Manager
- FTP Manager
- File Manager
- PageWizard

Web Server Config

- Password Protect Directories
- Redirects
- MIME Types
- Apache Handlers
- HotLink Protection
- Index Manager
- IP Deny Manager
- Error pages
- Image Manager
- Leech Protect

Databases

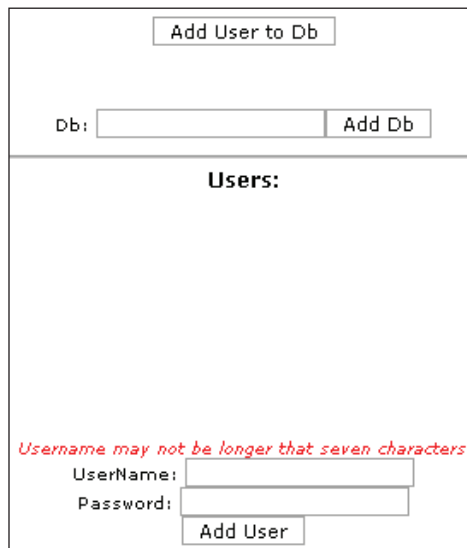
- MySQL Databases
- phpMyAdmin
- PostgreSQL Databases

If you plan to install XOOPS onto a server managed by a web-hosting company, you will need a few tools. Listed below are my favorites for each type of tool you need:

- Winzip or the free ZipGenius. You can also use the built-in Windows Explorer unpacking feature, i.e. right-mouse click on a file and select **open** and then drag and drop files outside of the ZIP archive. However, use Winzip or ZipGenius for a full-featured un-archiving program that also handles files archived in Linux.
- Filezilla for FTP.
- Notepad++, a programmer's editor.
- Putty, a free Telnet/SSH client. You need this only if you have SSH command-level access to the web-host servers, and plan to install anything that cannot be installed using FTP. Usually, you will not need this.

You will need to create a MySQL database and a MySQL user ID that will be used by XOOPS to store information into this database.

To create a database, go to the control panel for your web-host account. You need to learn how to use this control panel; one web-host may have a different control panel than another, but they all basically work in the same fashion and most likely will use phpMyAdmin to manage your MySQL database. Following is the MySQL section of the cPanel control panel used by BlueHost:



The screenshot shows a web form for MySQL database management. At the top, there is a button labeled "Add User to Db". Below it, there is a label "Db:" followed by an input field and a button labeled "Add Db". Underneath, the section is titled "Users:". A red warning message states "Username may not be longer than seven characters". Below this, there are two input fields: "UserName:" and "Password:". At the bottom of this section is a button labeled "Add User".

As you can see, it is quite intuitive. So you can easily create the required MySQL database and user ID to log into that database. Following are the steps needed to create a MySQL database using the cPanel for `www.bluehost.com`:

1. Log into the cPanel.
2. Click the icon for MySQL.
3. Create a user for your database (keep it short). This is the `dbusername`, which you will be using later.
4. Create a database (keep it short).
5. An important step is to click the **Add User** button; otherwise, the user ID will not be able to connect to this new MySQL database, and the installation of XOOPS will fail.

The format for the MySQL user name will be `<yourwebusername>_<dbusername>`, where `<yourwebusername>` is the user ID your web-host provider assigned to you to log into its website and the control panel shown previously. The `<dbusername>` is the user created for your database above.

The format of the MySQL database name will be `<yourwebusername>_<dbname>`, where `<dbname>` is the name of your MySQL database. Your host address will be `localhost`. For example, if you use the following names:

`dbusername: billyjean`

`password: password`

`dbname: DB1`

and your login user name for the web-hosting company (`<yourwebusername>`) is `jimmydea` (which is sometimes the first 8 characters of your domain name), then you will use the following information in the web-based installation of XOOPS:

`Hostname: localhost`

`DBUser: jimmydea_billyjean`

`Password: password`

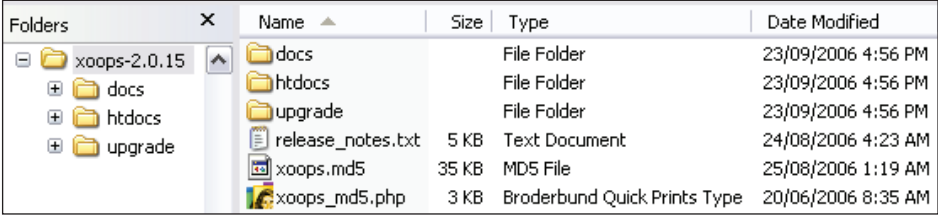
`DBName: jimmydea_DB1`

Make sure to write this information down in a safe place. You can also use the default user ID and password that your web-host provider gave you to create a new MySQL database during the web-based installation of XOOPS.

Installing XOOPS

Download the latest stable release of XOOPS to your local computer. We will use XOOPS 2.0.15, since that was the latest stable release available for download at the time of writing this book.

Uncompress the `XOOPS.zip` file to a folder on your computer, as shown below:



Folders	Name	Size	Type	Date Modified
[-] xoops-2.0.15	[+] docs		File Folder	23/09/2006 4:56 PM
[+] docs	[+] htdocs		File Folder	23/09/2006 4:56 PM
[+] htdocs	[+] upgrade		File Folder	23/09/2006 4:56 PM
[+] upgrade	release_notes.txt	5 KB	Text Document	24/08/2006 4:23 AM
	xoops.md5	35 KB	MD5 File	25/08/2006 1:19 AM
	xoops_md5.php	3 KB	Broderbund Quick Prints Type	20/06/2006 8:35 AM

I like to use Windows Explorer to create a folder called `C:\Download` into which I extract all files downloaded from the Internet.

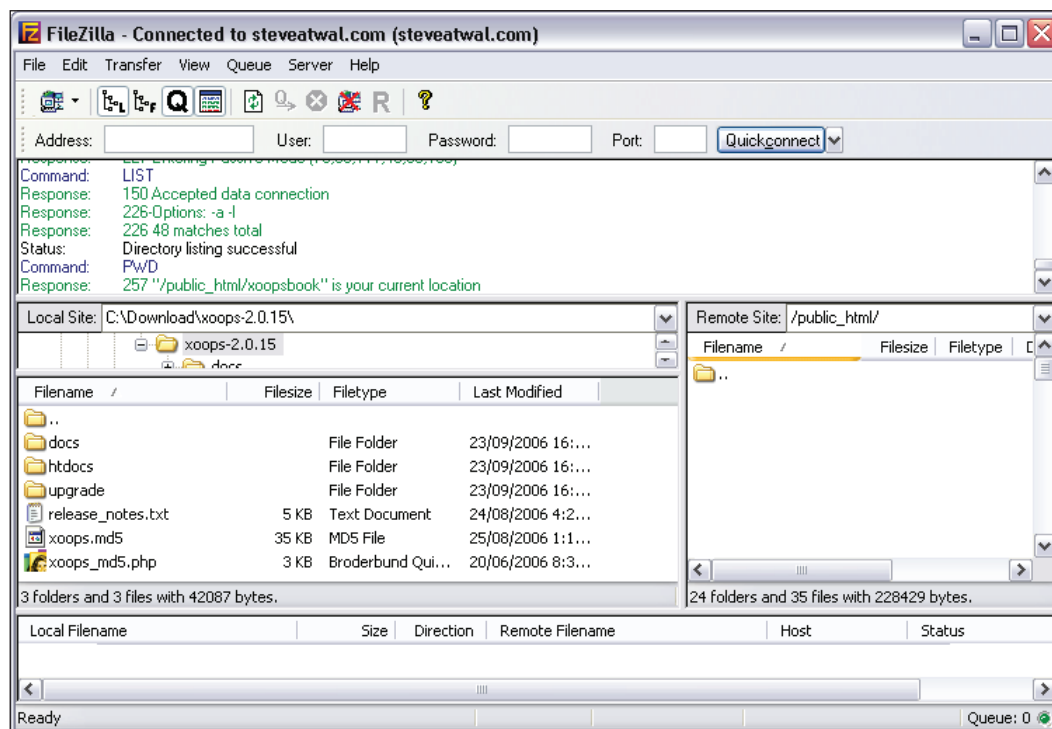
Installing XOOPS

The only folder you need is the **htdocs** folder; other folders are not needed for a new installation of XOOPS, so you can ignore those.

For a local installation of XOOPS, simply copy the contents of the `htdocs` folder into a new folder inside the `\xampplite\htdocs` folder. This is useful if you decide to test multiple installations of XOOPS, each with a separate website. Thus, you may be testing the following websites, which are all running a copy of XOOPS independent of each other:

- `\xampplite\htdocs\website1`
- `\xampplite\htdocs\website2`
- `\xampplite\htdocs\website3`

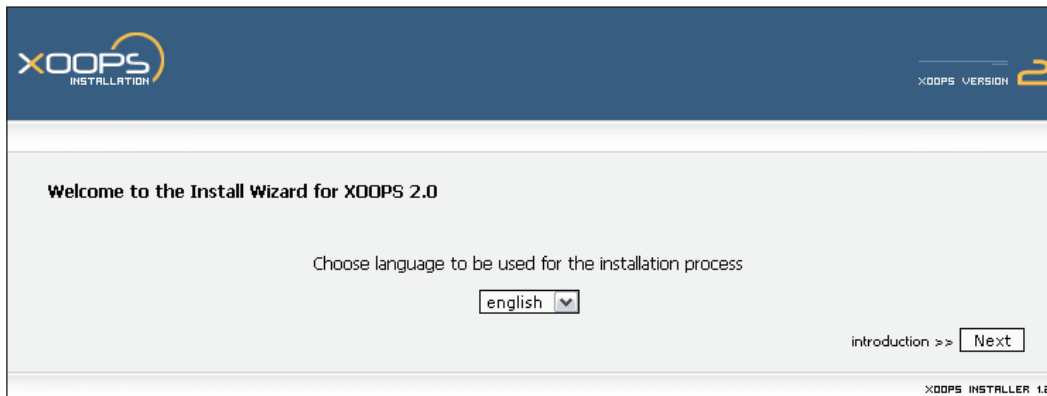
For a hosted installation of XOOPS, start up Filezilla, log into the server with your web-host provider, and then copy the contents of the `html` folder into either the root of the `public_html` folder on the web-host server or a folder within that (if you plan to run multiple websites).



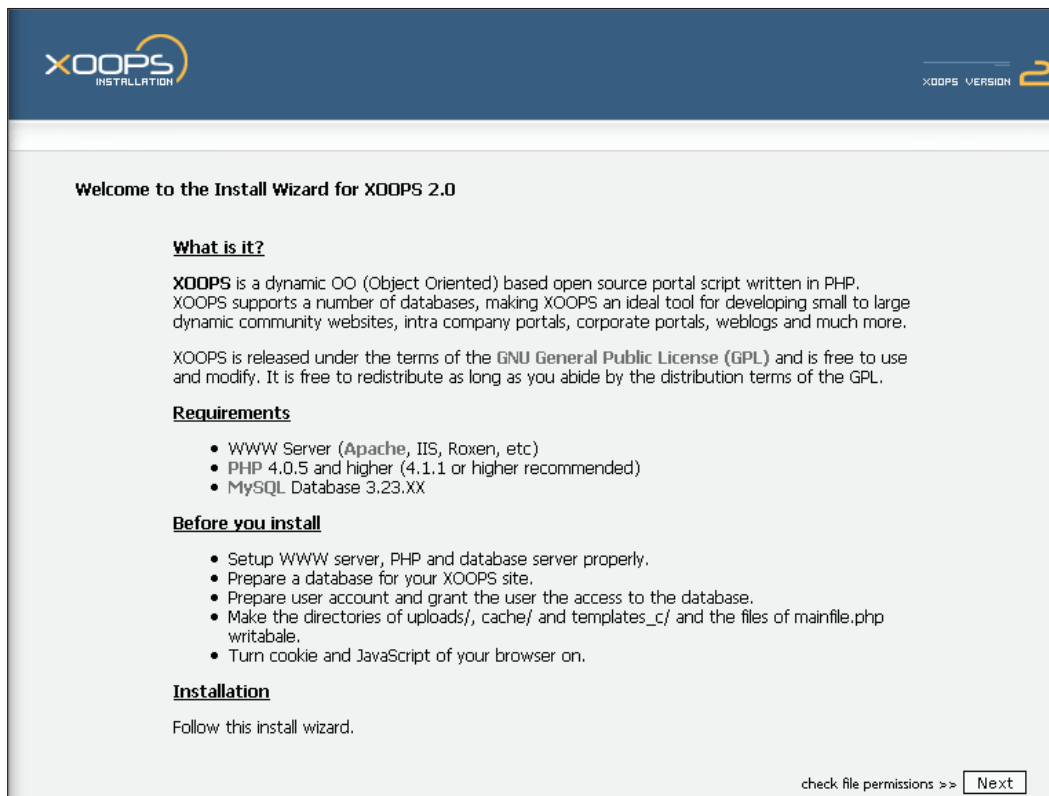
Upload the XOOPS files to the root of your website (the `public_html` folder) to have XOOPS launched as soon as someone visits your website.

After you upload all the files and folders in the `html` folder to your web server root folder, you are ready to start the web-based installation of XOOPS.

Start up your favorite web browser, such as Mozilla Firefox or Internet Explorer, and go to your website. For a local installation, simply enter `http://localhost` into your web browser; for a hosted installation, enter the name of your website such as `http://www.<your website>.com`. The rest of the installation process will be fairly simple, but may require updating file and folder permissions on your web-host server.

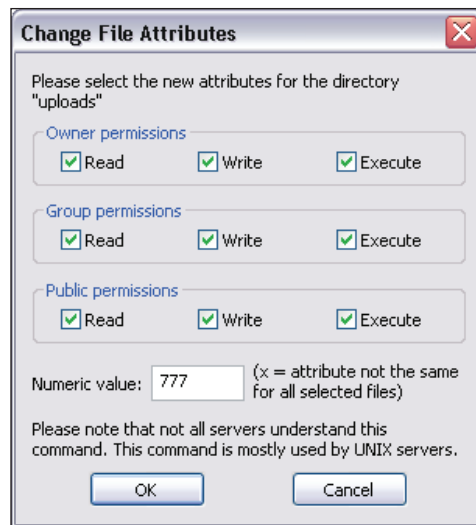


Click **Next** to use the default **english** language for XOOPS. This will take you to the XOOPS welcome screen, which provides some useful information about permissions required for a proper setup.

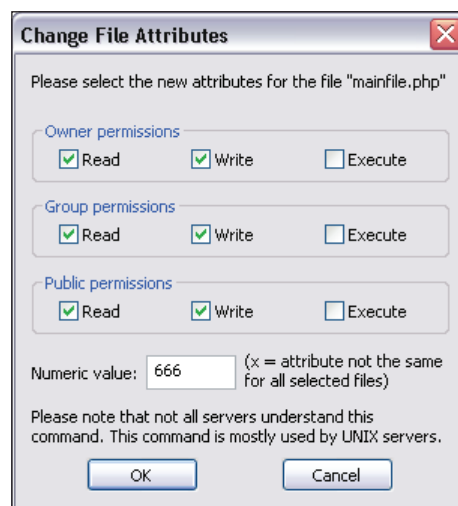


Click **Next**, if you have set the file permissions correctly. If you have not set the file permissions, you can do so using Filezilla, as follows:

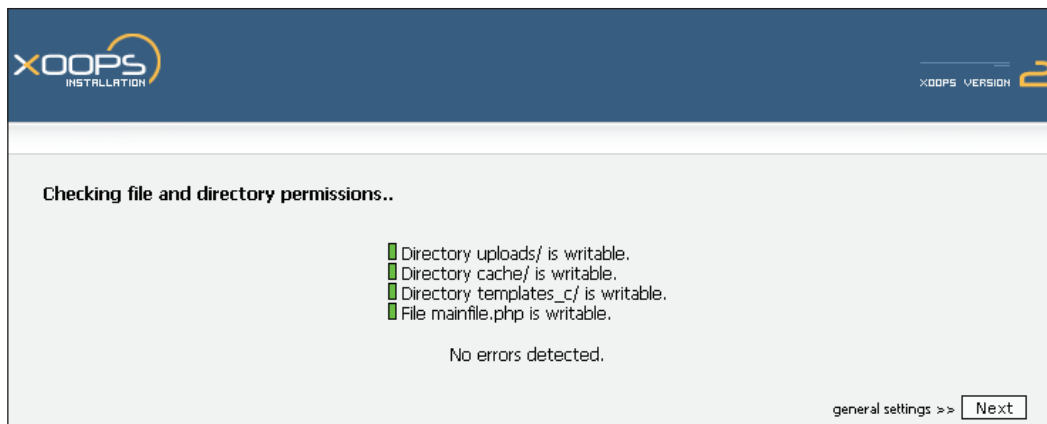
- Log into your website using Filezilla.
- Right-click the mouse on the folder **uploads**, located inside the `public_html` folder, and select **File Attributes**. Select all the permissions, as follows:



- Repeat this for the other folders `cache`, `templates_c`.
- Set the file permissions for `mainfile.php` to the equivalent of Linux `chmod 666`, i.e. assign read and write permissions for everyone, as follows:



The next screen of the XOOPS installation will verify if the file permissions are set correctly.



XOOPS INSTALLATION

XOOPS VERSION 2

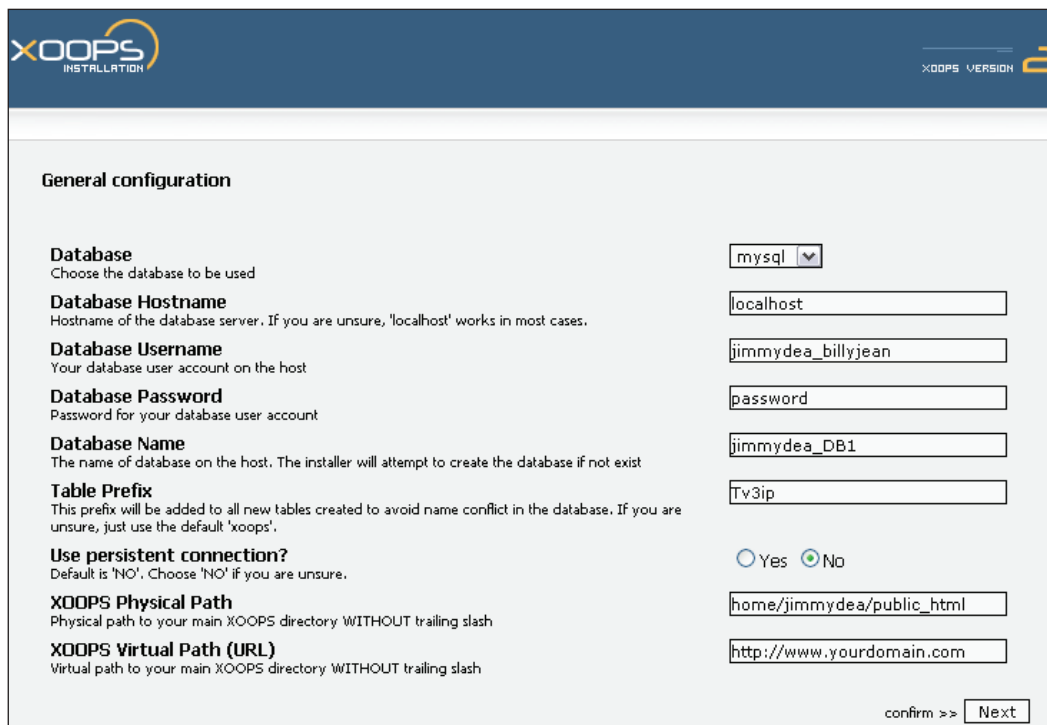
Checking file and directory permissions..

- Directory uploads/ is writable.
- Directory cache/ is writable.
- Directory templates_c/ is writable.
- File mainfile.php is writable.

No errors detected.

general settings >>

If all is well, you should see a message indicating **No errors detected**. You can then click **Next** to enter the MySQL database information required by XOOPS to function properly.



XOOPS INSTALLATION

XOOPS VERSION 2

General configuration

Database
Choose the database to be used

mysql

Database Hostname
Hostname of the database server. If you are unsure, 'localhost' works in most cases.

localhost

Database Username
Your database user account on the host

jimmydea_billyjean

Database Password
Password for your database user account

password

Database Name
The name of database on the host. The installer will attempt to create the database if not exist

jimmydea_DB1

Table Prefix
This prefix will be added to all new tables created to avoid name conflict in the database. If you are unsure, just use the default 'xoops'.

Tv3ip

Use persistent connection?
Default is 'NO'. Choose 'NO' if you are unsure.

☐ Yes ☒ No

XOOPS Physical Path
Physical path to your main XOOPS directory WITHOUT trailing slash

home/jimmydea/public_html

XOOPS Virtual Path (URL)
Virtual path to your main XOOPS directory WITHOUT trailing slash

http://www.yourdomain.com

confirm >>

The preceding screenshot shows the general configuration settings for a web-hosted installation. Note that the table prefix is randomly generated to provide extra security.

For a local installation, the fields will be different. The following is an example of the values used by XAMPP, which assigns a blank or empty password for the root (administrative user) for MySQL. Normally, for a web-hosted installation of XOOPS, you would assign a non-blank value for the MySQL root user.

Database Username: root

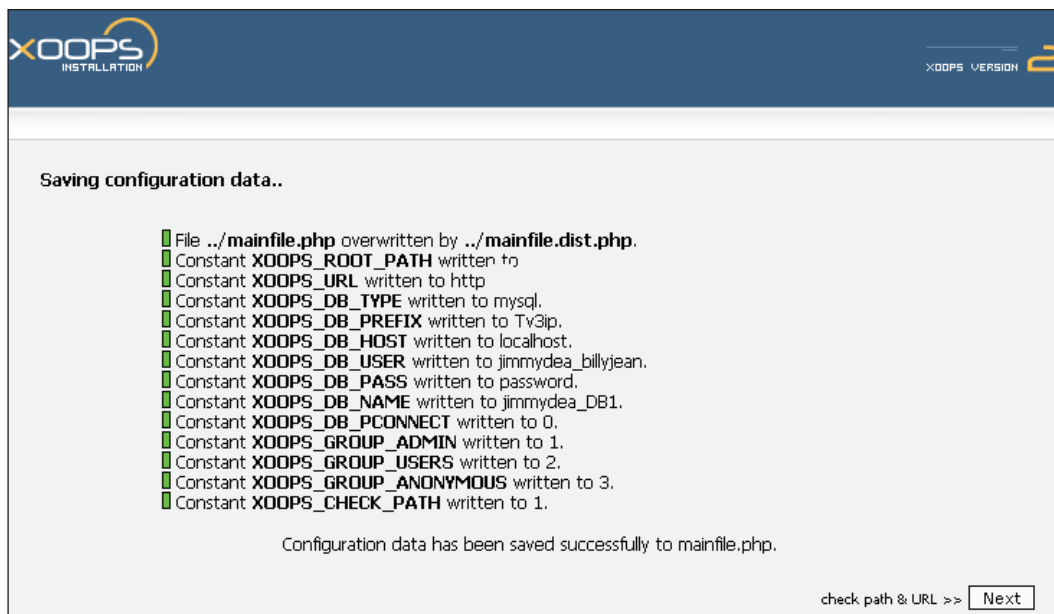
Database Password: <blank>

Database Name: jimmydea_DB1

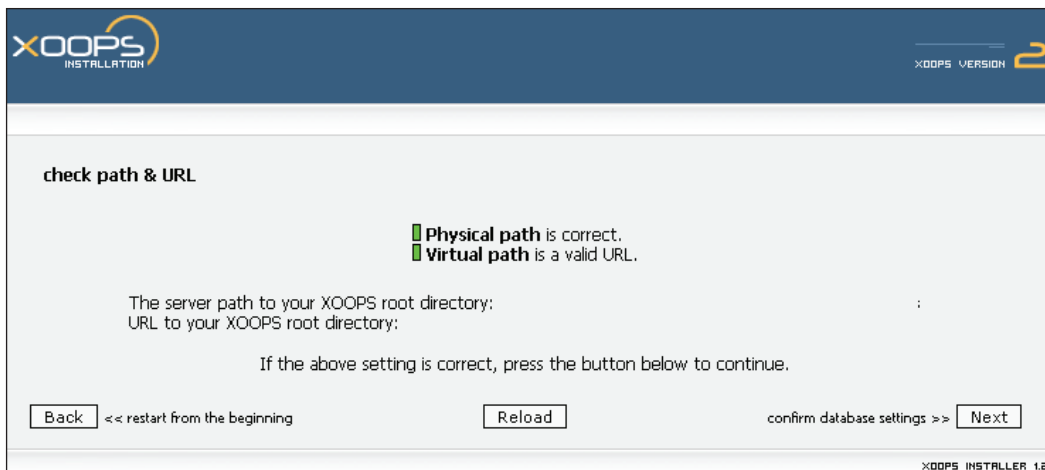
XOOPS Physical Path: C:/Download/xampplite/htdocs/mywebsite

XOOPS Virtual Path (URL): http://localhost/mywebsite

Click **Next** and you will have the chance to check your settings. Click **Next** again to save the configuration information. You will see the following screen for a local installation:



If everything was entered correctly for the database, you should get a message indicating **Configuration data has been saved successfully to mainfile.php**. Click **Next** to go to the next step of the installation.



XOOPS INSTALLATION

XOOPS VERSION 2

check path & URL

Physical path is correct.
Virtual path is a valid URL.

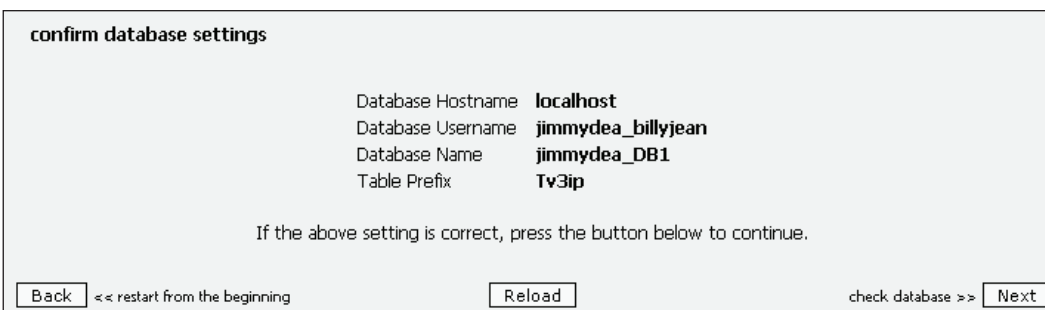
The server path to your XOOPS root directory: ;
URL to your XOOPS root directory:

If the above setting is correct, press the button below to continue.

Back << restart from the beginning Reload confirm database settings >> Next

XOOPS INSTALLER 1.2

Click **Next** to confirm the database settings.



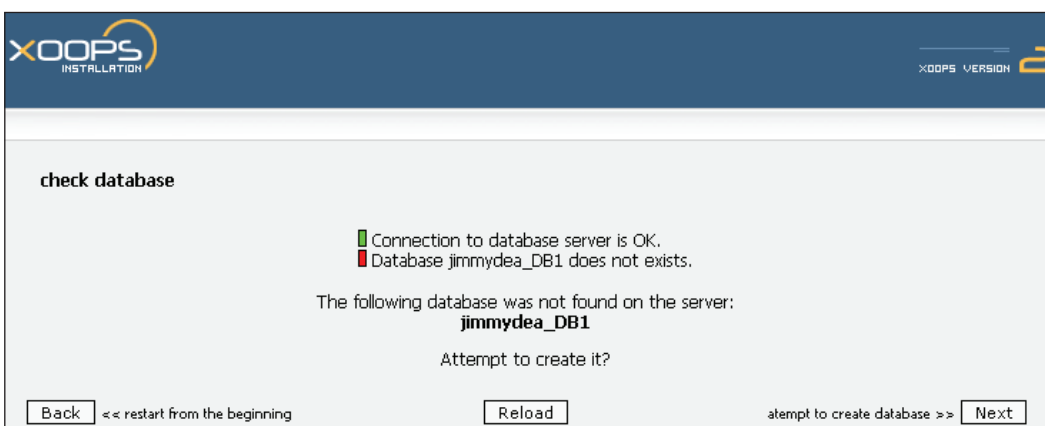
confirm database settings

Database Hostname **localhost**
Database Username **jimmydea_billyjean**
Database Name **jimmydea_DB1**
Table Prefix **Tv3ip**

If the above setting is correct, press the button below to continue.

Back << restart from the beginning Reload check database >> Next

Click **Next** to check if the database exists.



XOOPS INSTALLATION

XOOPS VERSION 2

check database

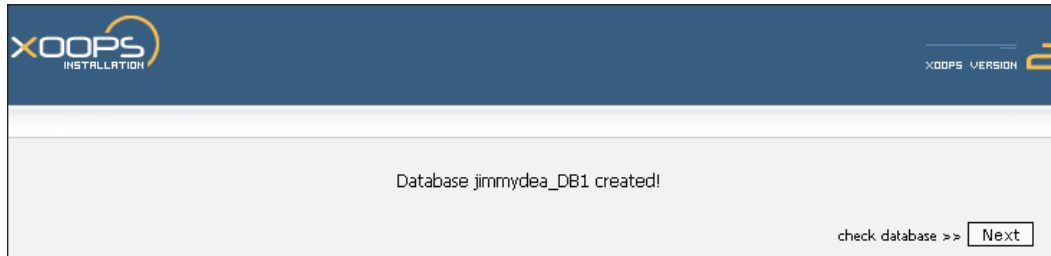
Connection to database server is OK.
Database jimmydea_DB1 does not exists.

The following database was not found on the server:
jimmydea_DB1

Attempt to create it?

Back << restart from the beginning Reload attempt to create database >> Next

For a local installation, you may want the web-based installation wizard to create the MySQL database for you, as in the preceding example. Thus, you will see a message such as **Attempt to create it?**. Click **Next** to allow XOOPS to create the database. For a web-hosted installation, this process may fail due to the fact that the database user has to be assigned permissions to the database first. It is the best practice to manually create the MySQL database first before running the XOOPS installation wizard.

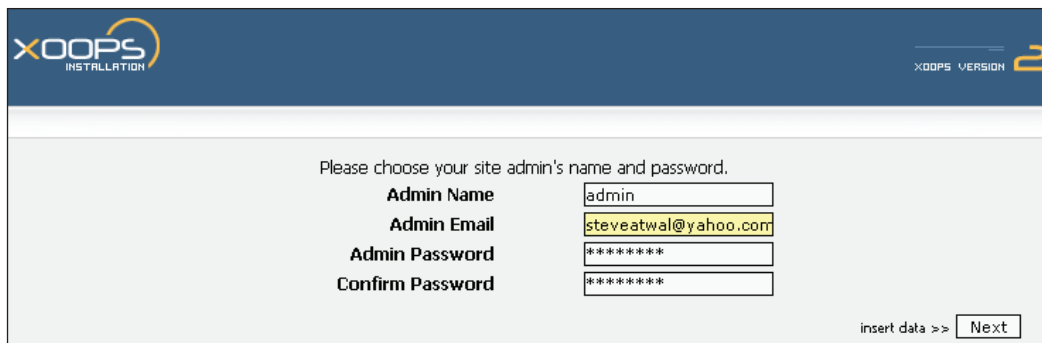


In the preceding screen, XOOPS indicates that the MySQL database was created successfully. Click **Next** to check the database. The following screen indicates that XOOPS was able to connect to the MySQL database.



Click **Next** to create the database tables that XOOPS needs to function appropriately.

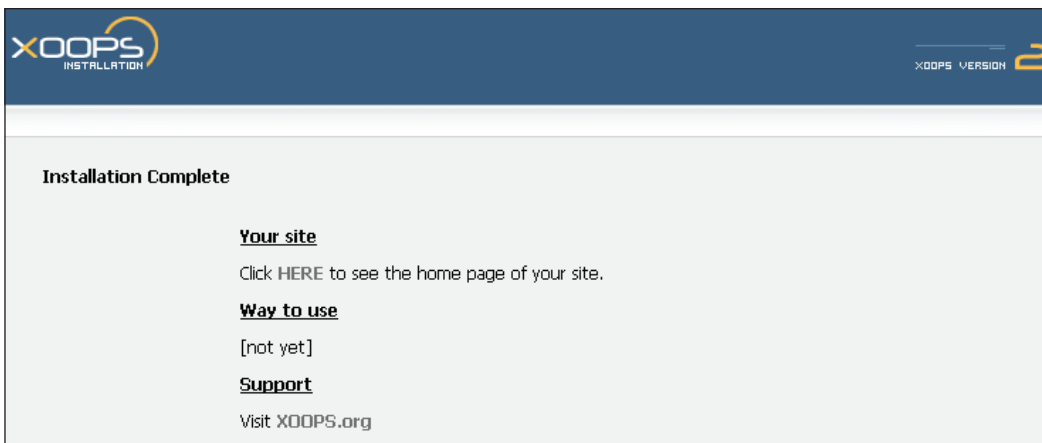
If all is well, you will get a message indicating **Database tables created**. Click **Next** to create the administrator user ID and password that you will use to manage XOOPS using the Internet.



The screenshot shows the XOOPS installation interface. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the XOOPS logo and 'INSTALLATION' text on the left, and 'XOOPS VERSION 2' on the right. The main content area is light gray and contains the instruction 'Please choose your site admin's name and password.' Below this, there are four labeled input fields: 'Admin Name' with the value 'admin', 'Admin Email' with the value 'steveatwal@yahoo.com', 'Admin Password' with '*****', and 'Confirm Password' with '*****'. At the bottom right of the form, there is a link 'insert data >>' and a 'Next' button.

Enter your name or nickname as a user ID, email address, and password for the administrator user ID you want to create. Don't lose this information or you may not be able to log into your XOOPS website to manage it or make any changes to it. Click **Next** once you have decided what you want for these values.

XOOPS will populate the database tables with default values and install the module required to allow you to administer XOOPS via the web. Click **Next** to finish the installation.



The screenshot shows the 'Installation Complete' screen. It has the same header as the previous screen. The main content area is light gray and contains the text 'Installation Complete' followed by three sections: 'Your site' with a link 'Click HERE to see the home page of your site.', 'Way to use' with the text '[not yet]', and 'Support' with the text 'Visit XOOPS.org'.

Note that after installation, you can install any number of additional modules you may need.

Well done! If you got this far then XOOPS has now been successfully installed. All you have to do now is clean up, which ensures that a key file used for proper operation of XOOPS is never updated accidentally and removes the installed files. To accomplish this:

1. Use Filezilla to log into your web-host and go to the `public_html` folder.
2. Right-click the mouse on the `mainfile.php` file and select **File Attributes**.
3. Uncheck all the **Write** and **Execute** permissions. This sets the permissions to **Read Only** for everyone, which is equivalent to the Linux command of `chmod 444`. This ensures that the file is never updated accidentally, which may cause problems for the operation of the XOOPS software.
4. In addition, remove the `install` folder. If you don't, you will get a warning to do so when you log into XOOPS to administer it.

To see what your new website looks like with XOOPS installed on it, open your web browser and go to either `http://localhost` or `http://www.yourdomain.com`. It will look something like this:



In the coming chapters, we will show you how to make it look very different and provide the functionality you require.

Summary

We have covered a lot of ground in this chapter. We have shown you how to set up your local development environment, and shown you what you need to do before you install XOOPS on your live, public-facing, website. And finally, we have shown you how to set up XOOPS. You should now be ready to delve into the next chapter, which shows you how to fine tune and configure XOOPS for your needs before you start adding actual web content.

3

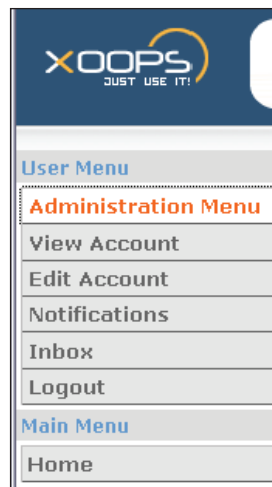
Basic Configuration

Now that you have set up XOOPS, you will want to change the basic configuration to suit your needs. For example, you may want to change the title of your website (which appears at the top of a web page), your site logo, information that is useful for search engines so that others can find your website more easily, email settings to ensure that you receive any messages sent from your website, and much more. We will go over fine tuning the following settings:

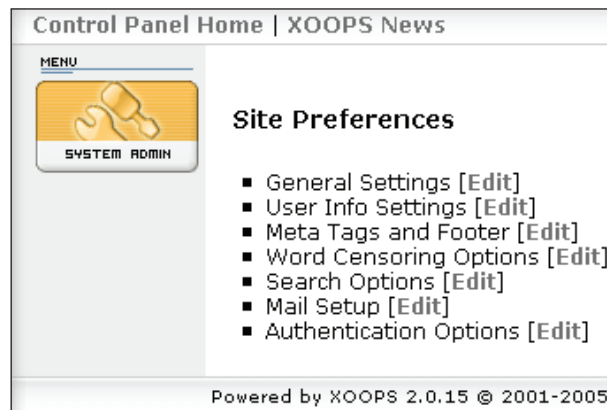
- General settings
- Extended profiles settings
- Meta tags and footer
- Word censoring options
- Search options
- Mail setup
- Authentication options

General Settings

Administration of XOOPS is managed using a web browser and logging in as an administrator to your website. To do this, enter the administrator login name and password you specified in Chapter 2 to install your copy of XOOPS. When you log into your website with your administrator user ID, you will not be presented with the normal **User Menu**, but one that has a link to the **Administration Menu**. When you click on the **Administration Menu** link, you will be presented with the Administrator page, as shown in the following screenshot:



To get to the **General Settings** screen, click on the **System Admin** icon, then the **Preferences** link, and then **Edit** next to **General Settings**, as shown in the following screenshot:



Under **General Settings**, you will set up your **Site Name**, **Slogan for your site**, **Default language**, **Default timezone**, **Default theme**, and many other default settings. I will only go over the settings you will use most often; other settings are fairly intuitive.

- **Site name** is what you will call your website. This will appear in the page title of a web browser when someone navigates to your site. The site name will also be used when an email is sent from XOOPS to any registered user.
- The **Slogan** will also be displayed in the page title of a web browser, right after the **Site name**. It may also be used by search engines.

- **Admin mail address** is used by XOOPS to send any automatic notifications or special administration email messages generated by XOOPS, such as new user registrations.
- **Default language** is set to the language you wish to use to display the non-dynamic content for your website, such as the on-screen hard-coded labels and menu descriptions for both the user screens and the administration screens. If you have installed the language files for XOOPS or for the module being used (see `/languages` or `/module/languages`), then you can change the default language to one of these other languages.
- **Module for your start page** is initially set to **None**. If you have installed a specific module that you would like to be displayed as the start page, you can select it from this drop-down box. All the modules currently available to your XOOPS system will be shown in the drop-down box and you can simply select the module you wish to use for your start page. For example, a common module is the **News** module. So if you have this installed, then you can automatically redirect users who visit your website, such as `www.yourdomain.com`, to the **News** module, i.e. `www.yourdomain.com/modules/news/`. Leaving the value as **None** will display your own custom block. Modules provide the functionality of a XOOPS site, and we will look at them in more detail in the next few chapters.
- **Server timezone** and **Default timezone** can be set if you know what timezone your web-host is in and your city timezone as offsets from GMT (Greenwich Mean Time); otherwise, leave these values alone for now.
- The **Default theme** choice will determine the look and feel of your XOOPS website, and this can be easily selected using the drop-down box. Each theme will change the look of your site, and the **Default theme** option determines the theme that any visitor to your website will see. The **Default theme** may not be too exciting, so you may want to try some of the others included with XOOPS or install a different one. XOOPS themes are located in the `/themes` folder. If you select a different theme, you will not see the change until you apply the theme by clicking **Go** at the bottom of the screen. To see how this works, try changing the theme to **x2t**, which leaves the administration menus the same, but gives a more pleasing look.
- If you make any changes to your theme template files in `/themes/<theme name>/templates`, then the **Check templates for modifications?** option allows you to ensure that these changes are applied automatically to the XOOPS system. This is normally turned off since such changes are not often done to a live site.
- Registered users are able to select their own theme for visiting the site. This theme can be chosen from the **Selectable themes** option. To enable themes that users can use, click on one or more than one (by holding down

the *Ctrl* key). If you want a consistent theme for your website with no end-user options to change this look, select the same theme as the **Default theme**.

- **Default template set** determines the layout of the installed modules. Each module has a set of templates that specifies how information is displayed when data is input into a module, such as the **News** module.
- **Username for anonymous users** can be used to set the name displayed when unregistered users are allowed to post messages in forums or add comments to existing posts. By default, this name is set to **Anonymous**.

Preferences Main »» General Settings	
General Settings	
Site name	XOOPS Site
Slogan for your site	Just Use it!
Admin mail address	mail@steveatwal.com
Default language	english
Module for your start page	None
Server timezone	(GMT) Greenwich Mean Time, London, Dublin, Lisbon, Casablanca, Monrovia
Default timezone	(GMT) Greenwich Mean Time, London, Dublin, Lisbon, Casablanca, Monrovia
Default theme	default
Check templates for modifications ?	☐ Yes ☒ No
If this option is enabled, modified templates will be automatically recompiled when they are displayed. You must turn this option off on a production site.	
Selectable themes	default phpkaox x2t
Choose themes that users can select as the default theme	
Default template set	default
Username for anonymous users	Anonymous

- **Use gzip compression** can be used to try to speed up the display of web pages by first compressing the output. However, this may not work on all servers, as gzip support has to be installed on the server, so try it and if it does not work then turn it off.
- **Name for user cookies** is used to store the username value entered by a user when logging into XOOPS. This is used only when **Use custom session** is turned on (next option), and needs cookies to be allowed by the user's web browser. The cookie will then be saved for one year in the user PC.

- **Use custom session** can be set to **Yes** to allow XOOPS to remember the username entered into XOOPS to log in, by setting the value entered into the above cookie name. This allows you to log in more quickly by not having to type in this value every time.
- **Session expiration** can be set to the value, in minutes, for which a user can be idle before XOOPS automatically logs the user out. This is used only when **Use custom session** is set to **Yes**.
- **Session name** is the name used to identify each logged in user session. This is used only when **Use custom session** is set to **Yes**.
- **Debug mode** is used to diagnose problems with XOOPS by showing all information and error messages generated by XOOPS. You should turn this **off** before making your website publicly available. If a page does not display properly in XOOPS, you can turn on any or all the debug options, such as **Smarty Templates Debug** (for problems with templates).

Use gzip compression?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Name for user cookies. This cookie contains only a user name and is saved in a user pc for a year (if the user wishes). If a user has this cookie, username will be automatically inserted in the login box.	xoops_user
Use custom session Select yes to customise session related values.	☐ Yes ☒ No
Session name The name of session (Valid only when 'use custom session' is enabled)	xoops_session
Session expiration Maximum duration of session idle time in minutes (Valid only when 'use custom session' is enabled. Works only when you are using PHP4.2.0 or later.)	15
Debug mode Several debug options. A running website should have this turned off.	Off ▼

- **Activate banner ads** can be set to **Yes** to activate banners that are set up in the banners section. To manage banners, click on the **System Admin** icon and then the **Banners** link.
- **Turn your site off** can be set to **Yes** to turn your site off, i.e. no one will be able to view your website; instead, visitors will see a login box and only the administrator or authorized users will be able to login and view the website. This feature is useful when performing maintenance on your website, and you can enter an HTML message into the **Reason for turning off the site** field that will be displayed to visitors when your site is off.
- To avoid your activities on the site influencing the record of the number of banner ads' views on your site, you can set the **Your IP address** field to your current IP address. This can be left at the default value, unless you are performing extensive banner testing from a particular computer, in which case you should enter the IP address of that computer in this field and reset it back to the default value afterwards. Note that if you are using a residential cable modem or DSL connection, your IP address may be different from what you used last time for this field. So always determine and use your current IP address. On Windows 2000/XP, you can run the command `ipconfig` to find your IP address.
- **Use SSL for login** can be turned on to enable the username and password to be encrypted when transmitted from your computer to XOOPS. However, this requires that the firewall be allowed to receive data on port 443 on the web-host. So check with your web-host before using this feature. If enabled, it will display a **secure login** link below the username and password login fields on your website. This link will then take you to the web page entered into the field **URL where SSL login page is located** in the following screenshot.

Activate banner ads?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Turn your site off? Select yes to turn your site off so that only users in selected groups have access to the site.	☐ Yes ☒ No
Select groups that are allowed to access while the site is turned off. Users in the default webmasters group are always granted access.	Webmasters Registered Users
Reason for turning off the site The text that is presented when the site is closed.	The site is currently closed for maintenance. Please come back later.
Your IP address This IP will not count as an impression for banners	127.0.0.1
Use SSL for login?	☐ Yes ☒ No
SSL Post variable name The name of variable used to transfer session value via POST. If you are unsure, set any name that is hard to guess.	xoops_ssl
URL where SSL login page is located	https://

- **Default Comment Display Mode** indicates the structure of the way comments to posts are displayed. Comments can be activated for particular modules, such as the **News** module. Comments can be displayed as flat, nested, or threaded. This setting also affects the way posts are displayed in forums. **Default Comments Display Order** specifies the sort order for comments.
- **Enable IP bans** and **Enter IP addresses that should be banned from this site** are used to prevent "bad" users, such as spammers and hackers, from accessing your website.
- **Module-wide Cache** enables XOOPS to retain a snapshot on the server of the current data displayed by a module, which speeds retrieval and display. When turned on, new data captured by modules will not be shown until the cache-time activation expires, or until you reset these values to **No Cache**. This overrides any cache settings for individual modules.

Default Comment Display Mode	Nested
Default Comments Display Order	Oldest First
Enable IP bans? Users from specified IP addresses will not be able to view your site	☐ Yes ☒ No
Enter IP addresses that should be banned from the site. Separate each with a , case insensitive, regex enabled. ^aaa.bbb.ccc will disallow visitors with an IP that starts with aaa.bbb.ccc aaa.bbb.ccc\$ will disallow visitors with an IP that ends with aaa.bbb.ccc aaa.bbb.ccc will disallow visitors with an IP that contains aaa.bbb.ccc	127.0.0.1
Module-wide Cache Caches module contents for a specified amount of time to enhance performance. Setting module-wide cache will override module item level cache if any.	There is no module that can be cached.

User Info Settings

To access this option, click on the **System Admin** icon to show the **System Configuration** screen. Then, click on **Preferences** to show the **Site Preferences** screen, and from there click on **Edit** next to **User Info Settings**, which will allow you to change settings that can be applied to all users and their login. Following are the options available on the settings screen:

- **Allow New User Registration** may be used to allow or disallow new users to become registered users of your site with their own login username and password. This may be set to **No** if you feel you have too many users and you need to put a cap on this, which may be due to many users requesting restricted content that is driving up your traffic and bandwidth costs with your web-host.
- **Select activation type of newly registered users** allows you to specify how users will be authenticated; either validating automatically by XOOPS or sending a validation email to a user by XOOPS before they can login (recommended method). If the latter is selected, then XOOPS sends an email to the user at the email address they specified when registering; the user will then validate their email address by clicking on the link provided in the email. This double opt in method (registration, verification of email) ensures that you can contact your users at a later time, if needed, with a valid email address.

- **Select Group to Which Activation Mail Will be Sent** allows an administrator to set which group is to receive an email notification when a new user signs up on your website.

Preferences Main »» User Info Settings	
User Info Settings	
Allow new user registration?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Select yes to accept new user registration	
Minimum length of password required	5
Minimum length of username required	3
Maximum length of username	10
Allow users to change email address?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Notify by mail when a new user is registered?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Select group to which new user notification mail will be sent	Webmasters ▼
Select activation type of newly registered users	Requires activation by user (recommended) ▼
Select group to which activation mail will be sent	Webmasters ▼
Valid only when 'Activation by administrators' is selected	
Select the level of strictness for username filtering	Strict (only alphabets and numbers) ▼
Allow custom avatar upload?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Minimum posts required	0
Enter the minimum number of posts required to upload a custom avatar	
Avatar image max width (pixel)	80
Avatar image max height (pixel)	80
Avatar image max filesize (byte)	35000
Allow users to delete own account?	☐ Yes ☒ No

- **Display Disclaimer** and **Registration Disclaimer** may be used to show any special disclaimers for any users wishing to register on your website, e.g. "This website is free for your enjoyment, but we take no responsibility for any inaccurate information."

Enter names that should not be selected as username Separate each with a , case insensitive, regex enabled.	webmaster ^xoops ^admin
Enter emails that should not be used in user profile Separate each with a , case insensitive, regex enabled.	xoops.org\$
Display disclaimer? Select yes to display disclaimer in registration page	☒ Yes ☐ No
Registration disclaimer Enter text to be displayed as registration disclaimer	While the administrators and moderators of this site will attempt to remove or edit any generally objectionable material as quickly as possible, it is impossible to review every message. Therefore you acknowledge that all posts made to this site express the views and opinions of the author and not

On the **User Info Settings** screen, you can also specify restrictions on the username length (maximum and minimum), email addresses that cannot be used by end users, minimum user password length, whether users can change their email addresses or delete their accounts, special user names that cannot be used (because they are reserved for administration), and whether users can upload images (with the size specified in these options in pixels and KB) to represent themselves when creating new posts, such as those for discussion forums.

Meta Tags and Footer

The **Meta Tags and Footer** screen can be selected by clicking on the **System Admin | Preferences | Meta Tags and Footer**. Some of the options for this module are briefly described as follows:

- **Meta keywords** are the keywords that best describe the content of your website. These can then be used by search engines to locate your website when search-engine users type in words that they are searching for. Each keyword is separated by a comma or a space, e.g. technology, education, free.
- **Meta description** can be used to provide a short description of your website. This can also be indexed by search engines for later searching by end users.
- **Meta Robots** tells search engines how to index your site for later searching on their websites. **Index, Follow** allows a search engine to index everything that is linked from the main website-index file. **No Index, No Follow** tells a search engine not to index anything on this website.
- **Meta Rating** can be used to indicate any age-level restrictions of content on your website, e.g. selecting **14 years** will mean that your web content is not suitable for anyone under the age of 14.

- **Meta Author** is used to show the author or creator of the site.
- **Meta Copyright** is used to show any copyright restrictions for the site, e.g. this helps protect you against someone copying your site content and publishing it on their site.
- **Footer** is used to display text at the bottom of every web page. This could be used to display a copyright notice.

Preferences Main »» Meta Tags and Footer

Meta Tags and Footer	
Meta Keywords The keywords meta tag is a series of keywords that represents the content of your site. Type in keywords with each separated by a comma or a space in between. (Ex. XOOPS, PHP, MySQL, portal system)	news, technology, headlines, xoops, xoop, nuke, myphpnuke, myphp-nuke, phpnuke, SE, geek, geeks, hacker, hackers, linux, software, download, downloads, free, community, mp3, forum, forums, bulletin, board, boards, bbs, php, survey, poll, polls, kernel, comment, comments, portal, odp, open, source, opensource, FreeSoftware, gnu, gpl, license, Unix, *nix, mysql, sql, database, databases, web site,
Meta Description The description meta tag is a general description of what is contained in your web page	XOOPS is a dynamic Object Oriented based open source portal script written in PHP.
Meta Robots The Robots Tag declares to search engines what content to index and spider	Index, Follow
Meta Rating The rating meta tag defines your site age and content rating	General
Meta Author The author meta tag defines the name of the author of the document being read. Supported data formats include the name, email address of the webmaster, company name or URL.	XOOPS
Meta Copyright The copyright meta tag defines any copyright statements you wish to disclose about your web page documents.	Copyright © 2001-2006
Footer Be sure to type links in full path starting from http://, otherwise the links will not work correctly in modules pages.	Powered by XOOPS 2.0 © 2001-2006 The XOOPS Project

Word Censoring Options

The **Word Censoring Options** screen can be selected by clicking on **System Admin | Preferences | Word Censoring Options**. This screen allows the administrator to turn on word censoring, which means that if any user enters any particularly objectionable words, then those words will be replaced with the value specified as **Bad words will be replaced with**. In the following example, we have enabled censoring of unwanted words (by default it is turned off) and if a user types in the words **pig** or **bully** into any module or forum then they will be replaced with **#OOPS#**.

Preferences Main >>> Word Censoring Options

Word Censoring Options	
Enable censoring of unwanted words? Words will be censored if this option is enabled. This option may be turned off for enhanced site speed.	☒ Yes ☐ No
Words to censor Enter words that should be censored in user posts. Separate each with a , case insensitive.	pig bully
Bad words will be replaced with: Censored words will be replaced with the characters entered in this textbox	#OOPS#
Go!	

Search Options

The **Search Options** screen can be reached via **System Admin | Preferences | Search Options**. This is a simple screen that allows the administrator to enable or disable site-wide search for the website, and specifies the minimum length of words that can be used for keyword searches. Since modules do not normally provide their own search functionality, they provide handlers to allow XOOPS to return results from the global search function; results are also sorted by module.

Preferences Main >>> Search Options

Search Options	
Enable global searches? Allow searching for posts/items within your site.	☒ Yes ☐ No
Minimum keyword length Enter the minimum keyword length that users are required to enter to perform search	5
Go!	

Mail Setup

The **Mail Setup** screen can be reached using **System Admin | Preferences | Mail Setup**. Normally, you do not need to change these settings since the default mail

delivery method of **PHP mail()** will allow you to use your webhost's mail server. These values are used when automatic notifications are sent by XOOPS to users. If you wish to use a different mail server then you have the option to specify **sendmail**, **SMTP**, or **SMTPAuth** to use your personal or corporate mail server for sending messages from XOOPS. You will have to obtain the correct settings from your webhost or corporate administrator when you specify a different mail server than the default **PHP mail()** setting.

Preferences Main »» Mail Setup

Mail Setup	
FROM address	mail@steveatwal.com
FROM name	Steve
FROM user	admin ▼
When the system sends a private message, which user should appear to have sent it?	
Mail delivery method	PHP mail() ▼
Method used to deliver mail. Default is "mail", use others only if that makes trouble.	
Path to sendmail	/usr/sbin/sendmail
Path to the sendmail program (or substitute) on the webserver.	
SMTP host(s)	
List of SMTP servers to try to connect to.	
SMTPAuth username	
Username to connect to an SMTP host with SMTPAuth.	
SMTPAuth password	
Password to connect to an SMTP host with SMTPAuth.	
Go!	

Authentication Options

The **Authentication Options** screen can be selected using **System Admin | Preferences | Authentication Options**. This screen can be used to integrate XOOPS with an Enterprise authentication system. In other words, if you already have a username and password database that can be accessed using LDAP, then XOOPS can be set to use that database for users trying to log into XOOPS. Only users that exist in this LDAP database can then log into XOOPS. In order for this to work, the web-host firewall must also allow access out on port 389 to connect to the LDAP server.

By default, XOOPS uses its own built-in database to store usernames and passwords for users that are registered to use the XOOPS website. So unless you need to tie your installation of XOOPS into an existing authentication system, you can leave the data on this screen as it is.

Preferences Main >>> Authentication Options	
Authentication Options	
Authentication Method Which authentication method would you like to use for signing on users.	XOOPS Database ▼
LDAP - Port Number LDAP - Port Number	389
LDAP - Server Name The name of your LDAP directory server.	your directory server
LDAP - Base DN The base DN (Distinguished Name) of your LDAP directory tree.	dc=xoops,dc=org
DN of the LDAP manager The DN of the user allow to make search (eg manager)	manager_dn
Password of the LDAP manager The password of the user allow to make search	*****
LDAP Version protocol The LDAP Version protocol : 2 or 3	3
Xoops User(s) bypass LDAP Authentication Xoops User(s) allow to bypass the LDAP login. Login directly in XOOPS Separate each loginname with a	admin
Login name use in the DN	☐ Yes ☒ No

We will discuss this further in Chapter 7 when we perform an intranet portal case study.

Summary

In this chapter, we have shown you how you can customize the options for your base installation of XOOPS. Customizing these options allows you to ensure that your website is going to operate in a manner consistent with your needs. Some options, such as meta tags and search engine optimization, are covered in greater detail in other books. When you have tuned the general settings, search options, meta tags, etc., you will have laid the foundation to creating a well-tuned website.

4

Administration of XOOPS

The basic installation of XOOPS may not be what you are looking for. In this chapter, we will show you how to perform the basic administration tasks required to get your XOOPS site running the way you want it to. We will delve into the following:

- Managing users and groups
- Adding and activating site modules
- Blocks and content positioning
- Miscellaneous tools for managing banners, images, smilies, avatars, templates, and comments

Managing Users and Groups

Users who can access and use your website are basically of two types:

- Anonymous
- Registered

Until visitors identify themselves to your website by logging in, they are classified as anonymous. Once visitors are logged in, XOOPS treats them as registered users. Registered users can be given more permissions and privileges than anonymous users to access content on your website.

Users can also be given ranks to indicate how often they visit your website or contribute to posting messages on your website. We will discuss this more elaborately in the following sections.

User Registration

By default, anonymous users of our website `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com` will be able to register using the **Register now!** link on the bottom left of the main page. This is controlled by the **Allow new user registration?** option within **System Admin | Preferences | User Info Settings**. This is the usual method of getting users added to your website. With this self-registration process, an email confirmation is sent to the user at the email address they provide during registration. The user then has to confirm that this registration was indeed done by them by clicking on the web page link included in the confirmation email. The following screenshot is a sample confirmation email:

```
From: XOOPS <xoops@xoopsbook.steveatwal.com>
Sent: August 20, 2006 11:05:22 PM
To: youraccount@hotmail.com
Subject: User activation key for John

Hello John,

Thanks for subscribing to XOOPS. As a registered member you can:
- Send private messages among members
- Participate in discussion boards
- Get the latest news
- Submit content
- Much, much more....

The email address (youraccount@hotmail.com) has been used to register
an account.

To become a member of XOOPS, please confirm your request by clicking on
the link below:

http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com/modules/profile/activate.php?op=actv&id=9102&actkey=84ecrd4e

-----
Best Regards
XOOPS Book
(http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com/)
xoops@xoopsbook.steveatwal.com
```

An email is also sent to the administrator of your site notifying them of the new user registration.

In addition to this, you can add users manually from the administration area of the site, via the option **System Admin | Edit Users**. For now, we will assume that the normal method will be used and allow users to register themselves; not only does this reduce the amount of work for the administrator, but it also allows users to assign their own **Displayname** (that allows users to be a little creative) and **password**.

User Groups

Registered users can be assigned to groups and those groups can be given different permissions to your website. Mails can be sent to groups of users to keep them informed of changes and special information that you feel they need to be aware of.

In addition to anonymous and registered users, there is another standard group of users that is reserved for people who have full administrative rights to access and modify your website; this is the Webmasters group.

When you install XOOPS, you also create an initial user who belongs to the Webmasters group. You will use this username to access the administration area of your website. Keep the password safe for this username and never reveal it to anyone unless that person is going to access and manage the administration of your site.

You can either create new users within XOOPS and add them to the Webmasters group, or promote self-registered users to the Webmasters group.

One of the uses of groups might be to set up a group of people who are allowed to add content to your site using a particular module, such as the **News** module. This new group, which may be called, for example, Publishers, would then be granted **Module Access Rights** (which means that this set of users or group will be allowed to see this module and any content displayed by this module when they are logged into your site) and **Module Admin Rights** (which means that this set of users or group will be able to manage content using this module) to this **News** module. Note that anonymous users may also be given **Module Access Rights** for a public site where content, such as news, is always shown regardless of whether a user is logged in or not.

In summary, after a user has registered on our site, we can add that user to any special groups if we decide to allow access to or management of certain modules or blocks through the **Edit Groups** page that can be accessed from **System Admin | Groups** as seen in the following screenshot:

Edit Groups	
Webmasters	Modify
Registered Users	Modify
Anonymous Users	Modify
Create New Group	
Name	
Description	
System Admin rights	☐ Avatars ☐ Banners ☐ Blocks ☐ Comments ☐ Find Users ☐ Groups ☐ Image Manager ☐ Mail Users ☐ Modules ☐ Preferences ☐ Smilies ☐ Templates ☐ User Ranks ☐ Edit Users
Module Admin rights	☐ News
Module Access rights	☐ News
Block Access Rights	Left ☐ User Menu (ID: 1) ☐ Login (ID: 2) ☐ Search (ID: 3) ☐ Waiting Contents (ID: 4) ☐ Main Menu (ID: 5) ☐ Site Info (ID: 6) ☐ Who's Online (ID: 7) ☐ Top Posters (ID: 8) ☐ New Members (ID: 9) ☐ Recent Comments (ID: 10) ☐ Notification Options (ID: 11) ☐ Themes (ID: 12) ☐ News Topics (ID: 13) ☐ Big Story (ID: 14) ☐ Top News (ID: 15) ☐ Recent News (ID: 16) ☐ Moderate News (ID: 17) ☐ Navigate thru topics (ID: 18) ☐ Random news (ID: 19) Center Right
Create New Group	

Simply enter the new group name, description (the purpose of the group), and the access rights of this group. In the preceding screenshot, only one module is shown since additional modules have not been installed yet; this will obviously change as you add modules to your site, at which time you can return to this screen and update the group permissions.

Note that **System Admin Rights** will only be assigned to this new group if users added to this group will be allowed to make changes to any part of your website. Normally, you just need to select the **Module Access Rights** and the **Block Access Rights**, which means that users will be allowed to view content that is to be displayed by modules and blocks.

User Ranks

One method that some site administrators use to encourage users to take a more active role in their site is to assign user ranks. This lets other users know how much one user participates, for example in posting messages and comments, versus another user. Ranks by themselves do not confer any additional privileges to users.

You can create or change user ranks using **System Admin | User Ranks**. The default settings are normally sufficient, unless you have a highly active website where users are posting messages frequently and you need to assign detailed ranks based on the number of posts a user has made. The following screenshot shows the **Image** (number of stars) next to a user's name based on the number of posts (messages or comments) they have made:

User Ranks Settings					
Title	Min. Posts	Max. Posts	Image	Special Ranks	Action
Just popping in	0	20	☆☆☆☆☆	off	Edit Delete
Not too shy to talk	21	40	☆☆☆☆☆	off	Edit Delete
Quite a regular	41	70	☆☆☆☆☆	off	Edit Delete
Just can't stay away	71	150	☆☆☆☆☆	off	Edit Delete
Home away from home	151	10000	☆☆☆☆☆	off	Edit Delete
Moderator	0	0	☆☆☆☆☆	on	Edit Delete
Webmaster	0	0	☆☆☆☆☆	on	Edit Delete

Add a New Rank	
Rank Title	
Min. Posts	0
Max. Posts	0
Image	Browse...
Special	☐ Yes ☒ No (Special ranks can be assigned to users irrespective of the number of user posts)
Submit	

Note that the last option in the preceding screenshot indicates if that rank can be assigned to users regardless of how many posts they have made. This may be useful when assigning ranks to those users who are considered to be administrators or content publishers.

Finding Users

If your website becomes very popular, you may have thousands or millions of users. You can click on **System Admin | Find Users** to locate individual or groups of users that fit certain search criteria. The following screenshot explains this:

Find Users	
(Active Users: 2 Inactive Users: 0)	
Find Users	
User Name	Starts with
Real Name	Starts with
Email	Starts with
ICQ Number	Starts with
AIM Handle	Starts with
YIM Handle	Starts with
MSN Handle	Starts with
URL contains	
Location contains	
Occupation contains	
Interest contains	
Last login is more than X days ago	
Last login is less than X days ago	
Joined date is more than X days ago	
Joined date is less than X days ago	
Number of Posts is greater than X	
Number of Posts is less than X	
Type of users to show	☐ Only users that accept mail ☐ Only users that don't accept mail ☒ All users
Type of users to show	☒ Only active users ☐ Only inactive users ☐ All users
Sort by	User Name
Order	Ascending order
Number of users per page	
Submit	

For example, if you need the statistics on how many users signed up on your website in the last seven days, navigate to the **Find Users** page and enter a value of seven into the **Joined date is less than X days ago** field and click **Submit**.

Mailing Users

Another very useful function is the ability to send a standard email to all users, or users that belong to particular groups you have created. For example, if you have created a user group called **Family Members** and wish to send an email only to

them, then navigate to the **System Admin | Mail Users** page, select the **Family Members** group, enter a **subject**, type in your message in the **Body** field, and click **Send**. Messages can be limited to new registrations (by specifying a date for the **Registered date is after** field).

Note that selecting only the **Private Message** option will instead send the message to a private mailbox created for that user on your new website. The user will then have to log into your site to retrieve the message. The following screenshot explains this:

	Registered date is after (Format yyyy-mm-dd, optional)
	Registered date is before (Format yyyy-mm-dd, optional)
From Name (email only)	XOOPS Site
From Email (email only)	steveatwal@yahoo.com
Subject	
Useful Tags: {X_UNAME} will print user name	
Body Useful Tags: {X_UID} will print user id {X_UNAME} will print user name {X_UEMAIL} will print user email {X_UACTLINK} will print user activation link	
Send to	☒ Email ☐ Private Message
	Send

Adding and Activating Site Modules

Modules provide added functionality and extend the usefulness of your website. XOOPS ensures that these mini applications, or modules, have a coherent feel. The default installation of XOOPS includes only the **System** module, with the idea being that you have a more compact and faster website with only the modules that you need.

- The **System** module provides the functionality needed to manage your website, such as changing the theme, managing modules, finding and managing users, among others.
- There is a **Private Messaging** module called **MP Manager** that you may wish to install. The **MP Manager** module allows XOOPS to set up a mailbox for each registered user on your website, which in turn lets users send private messages to each other if they know the **Displayname** the other person used when they registered on your website. **Displaynames** are shown in other modules such as **Forums** when a user posts messages. The MP Manager module can be downloaded from www.exode-fr.com/mpmanager.rar.

Note that the functionality of the **System** module is available only to a Webmaster, after logging in; other modules can expose their functionality to all users or particular groups of users depending on whether or not they have been assigned that right by the administrator of the site. New modules can be downloaded manually from the XOOPS site and then unzipped and copied to the `/modules/` folder of your site.

New modules copied to the `/modules/` folder of your website will appear at the bottom of the **System Admin | Modules Administration** page, ready to be installed and activated.

Modules Administration					
Module	Version	Last Update	Active	Order (0 = hide)	Action
 SYSTEM ADMIN System	1	2006/9/27 22:38	☒		 
 NEWS News	1.44	2006/9/30 20:05	☒	1	 
 MP MANAGER MP Manager	2	2006/9/30 21:37	☒		 
Submit					
Module	Version		Action		

Installing Modules

In this section, we will install the **News** module shown in the preceding screenshot to our website at `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com`. To do this:

- First download the **News** module to your computer from the XOOPS site. The **News** module can be found under the **Information** subject at `www.xoops.org/modules/repository/` and, in particular, at the following URL: `http://dev.xoops.org/modules/xfmod/project/showfiles.php?group_id=1008&release_id=60`.
- On your computer, unzip the module file `XOOPS2_mod_news_1.44.zip` into a new folder called **news**.
- Use Filezilla to copy the entire **news** folder to the `/public_html/xoopsbook/modules/` folder.
- Navigate to **System Admin | Modules** to reach the **Modules Administration** page and the **News** module will appear at the bottom of the page as shown in the following screenshot.
- Click the **Install** icon in the **Action** column next to the **News** module.

Modules Administration					
Module	Version	Last Update	Active	Order (0 = hide)	Action
 SYSTEM ADMIN System	1	2006/9/27 22:38	☒		 
 MP MANAGER MP Manager	2	2006/9/30 21:37	☒		 
Submit					
Module	Version	Action			
 NEWS	1.44	 			

In the preceding screenshot, the icons under the **Action** column have the following purpose:

- The icon with the floppy disk is used to install a new module. This will start the web-based installation wizard for that module. This icon appears only next to the modules that have not yet been installed. These modules appear at the bottom of the page at **Modules Administration**.
- The information icon (the one with the **i**) is used to show any information for the module such as name, version, creator, and any other credits given by the developer of the module.
- For installed modules, the update module icon (the one with the circle around it) allows the administrator to recompile and update the database if a module isn't functioning properly or requires an update.
- For inactive (installed but not activated) modules (for which the **Active** column is not checked), the uninstall module icon (the one with the floppy disk and a red dot beneath it) allows the administrator to uninstall a module.

When the **Install Module** icon is clicked, the web-based installation wizard for the module starts. We can assign permissions to users and groups who can use the **News** module after it is installed. To do this, click on **System Admin | Groups** to reach the **Edit Groups** page. Then, click on **Modify** next to the type of user for which permissions are to be set, i.e. **Webmasters**, **Registered Users**, or **Anonymous Users**. The following screenshot shows how we can assign **Module Access Rights** to **Anonymous Users** so that anyone can view news items posted using this module at `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com`.

Groups Main >>> Modify Group	
Modify Group	
Name	Anonymous Users
Description	Anonymous Users Group
System Admin rights	☐ Avatars ☐ Banners ☐ Blocks ☐ Comments ☐ Find Users ☐ Groups ☐ Image Manager ☐ Mail Users ☐ Modules ☐ Preferences ☐ Smilies ☐ Templates ☐ User Ranks ☐ Edit Users
Module Admin rights	☐ MP Manager ☐ News
Module Access rights	☒ News
Block Access Rights	Left ☒ User Menu (ID: 1) ☒ Login (ID: 2) ☒ Search (ID: 3) ☒ Waiting Contents (ID: 4) ☒ Main Menu (ID: 5) ☒ Site Info (ID: 6) ☒ Who's Online (ID: 7) ☒ Top Posters (ID: 8) ☒ New Members (ID: 9) ☒ Recent Comments (ID: 10) ☒ Notification Options (ID: 11) ☒ Themes (ID: 12) ☐ News Topics (ID: 20) ☐ Big Story (ID: 21) ☐ Top News (ID: 22) ☐ Recent News (ID: 23) ☐ Moderate News (ID: 24) ☐ Navigate thru topics (ID: 25) ☐ Random news (ID: 26)
	Center Right
	Update Group

Uninstalling Modules

Navigate to the **System Admin | Modules** page. To uninstall a module, you must first deactivate it; the uninstall icon for the module will not appear until you deactivate it.

To deactivate a module, remove the checkmark next to the module in the **Active** column and click **Submit**. This will remove the module from the active list so that no visitors to your site will be able to see it, or any content that was displayed by it.

Returning to the **System Admin | Modules** page will then show the uninstall icon next to the module. To remove the module, simply click the uninstall icon. This will not remove the actual module files from the web server, but simply put the module into an available state (so that it can be installed and activated again if needed) and will list the module at the bottom of the **Modules Administration** page. To completely remove the module, remove the corresponding folder for it from the `/modules/` folder on your web server.

Hiding Modules

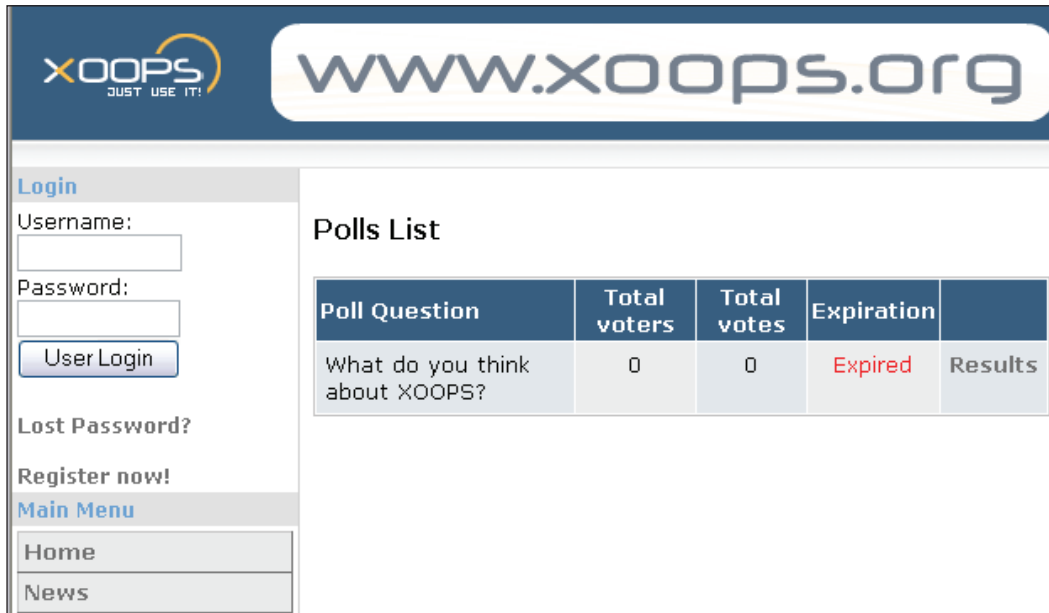
Modules usually appear automatically in menus when they are installed and activated. To hide a module, set the **Order (0=Hide)** column next to the module to **0**. This will hide any menu listings for the module, but will not deactivate it. You can still navigate to the page that contains the module and use it. This may be useful when you want to test whether the module works as expected before making it available for everyone else to use. On our sample website at xoopsbook.steveatwal.com, we have installed an additional module called **Polls**. The following screenshots show the effects before and after we hide the Polls module; note that the Polls module is still functional but it no longer appears in the left-hand side menu after we hide it.



The screenshot shows the XOOPS website interface. The top header features the XOOPS logo with the tagline "JUST USE IT!" and a "Using PHP" badge. The left sidebar contains a "Login" section with fields for "Username:" and "Password:", a "User Login" button, and links for "Lost Password?", "Register now!", and "Main Menu". Below the "Main Menu" link is a menu list with "Home", "News", and "Polls". The main content area displays the "Polls List" table.

Poll Question	Total voters	Total votes	Expiration	
What do you think about XOOPS?	0	0	Expired	Results

After we hide the Polls module (by setting **Order = 0**):



The screenshot shows the XOOPS website interface. At the top, there is a header with the XOOPS logo and the URL www.xoops.org. Below the header, there is a sidebar on the left with a 'Login' section containing fields for 'Username:' and 'Password:', a 'User Login' button, and links for 'Lost Password?', 'Register now!', and 'Main Menu'. The 'Main Menu' section includes links for 'Home' and 'News'. The main content area on the right is titled 'Polls List' and contains a table with the following data:

Poll Question	Total voters	Total votes	Expiration	
What do you think about XOOPS?	0	0	Expired	Results

Setting the Default Module

We will set the **News** module to appear as the default module to be shown on the main page of our website `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com`. To do this, we navigate to **System Admin | Preferences | General Settings** and change **Module for your start page** from **None** to **News** and click **Go!**. Now, when anyone navigates to `http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com` they will automatically be redirected to the **News** module at `http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com/modules/news/`. The main page of the website will now look as follows:



You can download many modules to install on your website from www.xoops.org/modules/repository/ such as:

- NewBB, a forum module for online discussions
- MultiMenu, to create custom menus
- TinyContent, for creating subject-based content

We can also download from www.smartfactory.ca, modules such as:

- SmartSection, an article-management module similar to **News** with sections
- SmartPartner, an advanced partners-management system
- SmartFAQ, a questions-and-answers management system
- WF_Downloads, which lets you create a **downloads** section on your site so that visitors can download files

Blocks and Content Positioning

Content and navigation menus can be positioned using **Blocks**. Blocks provide a way to group content generated by modules. You can also create new custom blocks. Navigate to **System Admin | Blocks** to see the current active blocks on your website, as follows:

Blocks Administration						
Show blocks visible in Top Page Group Registered Users Visible All Go!						
Block Description	Title	Module	Side Left-Center-Right	Weight	Visible	Action
User Menu	User Menu	System	☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	0	☒ Yes ☐ No	Edit
Login	Login	System	☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	0	☒ Yes ☐ No	Edit
Search	Search	System	☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐	0	☐ Yes ☒ No	Edit
Waiting Contents	Waiting Contents	System	☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐	0	☐ Yes ☒ No	Edit
Main Menu	Main Menu	System	☒ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	0	☒ Yes ☐ No	Edit
Site Info	Site Info	System	☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐	0	☐ Yes ☒ No	Edit
Who's Online	Who's Online	System	☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐	0	☐ Yes ☒ No	Edit
Top Posters	Top Posters	System	☐ ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐ ☐	0	☐ Yes ☒ No	Edit

The **Side** column has several options that allow you to either hide the block or position it on the web page. Each XOOPS theme divides website content into columns; left, center, or right. Some themes have only two columns, in which case the blocks that are positioned in the center column are not shown. Values for the **Side** column are:

- **Side Block – Left** (places the block in the left column of the page)
- **Center Block – Left** (places the block on the left side of the center column of the page)
- **Center Block – Center** (places the block in the center of the center column of the page)

- **Center Block – Right** (places the block on the right side of the center column of the page)
- **Side Block – Right** (places the block in the right column of the page)

The **Visible** column values show or hide the indicated block. Values for the **Weight** column determine in which order the blocks are displayed on your site. Blocks are displayed in increasing **Weight** order from top to bottom. The **Show blocks visible in** option lists the blocks that can be shown in the indicated module or at the top-level page of the site, e.g. the **User Menu** block is shown on all pages you see when you navigate to the site.

Installed modules usually come with their own blocks to allow for easy positioning of content and functionality provided by the module. Blocks allow the module to display content captured or generated by the module, whereas the module itself provides some sort of functionality such as displaying the current monthly calendar. For example, we can add the **Random News** block for the **News** module as follows:

- Select **Top Page** from the drop-down menu next to **Show blocks visible in**.
- Position the block on the page by selecting appropriately where to position the block using the **Side** column. We will position it on the right side of the page.
- Set the **Visible** column to **Yes**, to show the block.

Random news	Random news	News		0	☒ Yes ☐ No	Edit Delete
Polls	Polls	Polls		0	☐ Yes ☒ No	Edit Delete
Submit						

Blocks can also be used to run PHP scripts, or show static HTML, banners, and images. A Webmaster can create a new customized block in XOOPS using the **Add A New Block** page, by navigating to **System Admin | Blocks**, as shown next:

Add a new block	
Block Type	Side Block - Left ▾
Weight	0
Visible	☒ Yes ☐ No
Visible in	Top Page All Pages News Polls
Title	
Content	   MANAGER   SIZE ▾ FONT ▾ COLOR ▾ B <i>I</i> <u>U</u> + Add        [more...]
Content Type	HTML ▾
Cache lifetime	No Cache ▾
Preview Submit	

After adding a block, or module that has blocks, you also have to set permissions to allow anonymous (all) visitors to your website to see and use the blocks. Block permissions are set using **System Admin | Groups** by setting the **Block Access Rights** for **Anonymous Users**.

Groups Main >>> Modify Group	
Modify Group	
Name	Anonymous Users
Description	Anonymous Users Group
System Admin rights	☐ Avatars ☐ Banners ☐ Blocks ☐ Comments ☐ Find Users ☐ Groups ☐ Image Manager ☐ Mail Users ☐ Modules ☐ Preferences ☐ Smilies ☐ Templates ☐ User Ranks ☐ Edit Users
Module Admin rights	☐ Polls ☐ MP Manager ☐ News
Module Access rights	☒ Polls ☒ News
Block Access Rights	Left ☒ User Menu (ID: 1) ☒ Login (ID: 2) ☒ Search (ID: 3) ☒ Waiting Contents (ID: 4) ☒ Main Menu (ID: 5) ☒ Site Info (ID: 6) ☒ Who's Online (ID: 7) ☒ Top Posters (ID: 8) ☒ New Members (ID: 9) ☒ Recent Comments (ID: 10) ☒ Notification Options (ID: 11) ☒ Themes (ID: 12) ☐ News Topics (ID: 20) ☐ Big Story (ID: 21) ☐ Top News (ID: 22) ☐ Recent News (ID: 23) ☐ Moderate News (ID: 24) ☐ Navigate thru topics (ID: 25) ☐ Random news (ID: 26) ☐ Polls (ID: 27) Center Right
Update Group	

Miscellaneous Tools: Banners, Images, Smilies, Avatars, Templates, Comments

XOOPS allows you to add content that could be reused multiple times in various locations on your website. This content is listed under **System Admin**.

System Admin | Banners will show the page in the following screenshot. This allows you to create clients and advertisement banners for those clients, which can then be displayed on your site (usually at the top of each page of your site). One example is client Google with advertisement banners from its AdSense program. These banners may be images or flash movies, which when clicked will take you to the website advertised in the banner.

Current Active Banners						
Banner ID	Impressions	Imp. Left	Clicks	% Clicks	Client Name	Functions
1	1	Unlimited	0	0%	XOOPS	Edit Delete
2	1	Unlimited	0	0%	XOOPS	Edit Delete
3	1	Unlimited	0	0%	XOOPS	Edit Delete

Finished Banners							
Banner ID	Imp.	Clicks	% Clicks	Date Started	Date Ended	Client Name	Functions

Advertising Clients					
Banner ID	Client Name	Active Banners	Contact Name	Contact Email	Functions
1	XOOPS	3	XOOPS Dev Team	webmaster@xoops.org	Edit Delete

Add a New Banner

Client Name:

Impressions Purchased: 0 = Unlimited

Image URL:

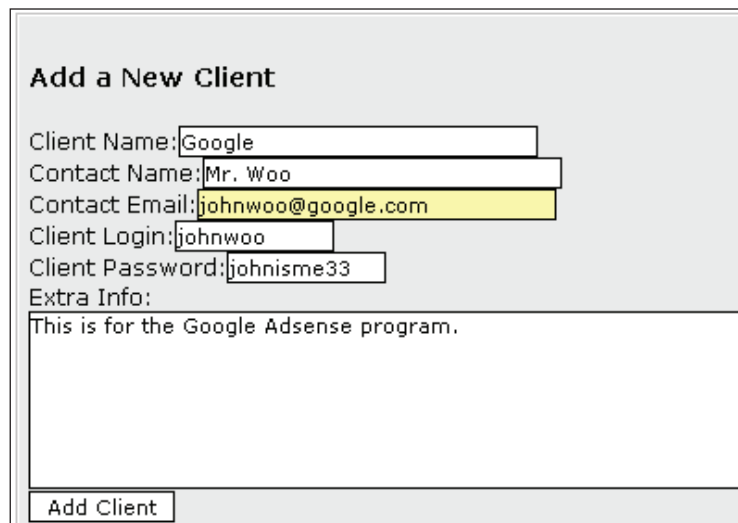
Click URL:

Use Html? ☐

Code Html:

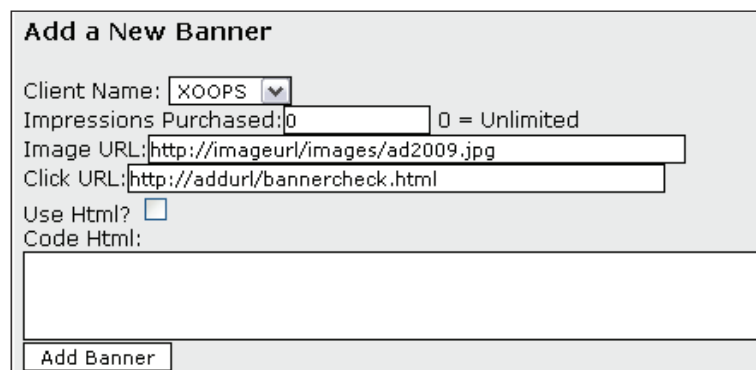
Each time one of your banners is shown to a visitor, the impressions made by this banner are increased by one by XOOPS and will be displayed under the **Impressions** column above. If a client is paying you to show the banner a set number of times, then the **Imp. Left** column will show how many times a banner still has to be shown before you have fulfilled your commitment after which you may turn the banner off unless the client pays you again to show the advertisement. Some clients pay you based on how many of your visitors click on their advertisement rather than how many times you show their advertisement, in which case the **Imp. Left** column will be set to the default of **Unlimited**, and instead you will be paid based on the actual number of clicks. Note that unless the client does not have its own automated system that keeps track of the number of click-throughs it receives (i.e. the number of times a visitor clicks on the advertisement on your site and is passed on to the client website), the information shown on this screen is for your use only and does not need to be sent to the client (unless there is a dispute and you feel that you are not being adequately compensated for the agreed upon click-through rate).

As an example, let's create a new client of Google, so that we can use its AdSense ads on our site, and then create a new banner for this client. The following screenshot shows the sample data for this. The client login and client password will be used by the client to check the status of its banner ad and other statistics when it logs in to the **Advertising Statistics** page on our site, such as <http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com/banners.php>, after its client account and banners have been created. This also lets the client update the URL to which its banner ad is directed, just in case it changes the focus of its advertisement.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add a New Client". It contains several input fields: "Client Name" with the value "Google", "Contact Name" with "Mr. Woo", "Contact Email" with "johnwoo@google.com", "Client Login" with "johnwoo", and "Client Password" with "johnisme33". Below these is a text area labeled "Extra Info:" containing the text "This is for the Google Adsense program.". At the bottom left is a button labeled "Add Client".

You must create a new client first before you use the Banners page to add a new banner. We will use this new section, as filled out in the following screenshot, to create a new banner advertisement for this client. Note that if more than one client is created, then you have to make sure you select the right client from the **Client Name** drop-down field when creating a new banner.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Add a New Banner". It contains several input fields: "Client Name" is a dropdown menu showing "XOOPS", "Impressions Purchased" is a text box with "0" and a label "0 = Unlimited", "Image URL" with "http://imageurl/images/ad2009.jpg", and "Click URL" with "http://addurl/bannercheck.html". There is a checkbox for "Use Html?" which is unchecked, and a text area for "Code Html:". At the bottom left is a button labeled "Add Banner".

Note that clients may have their own custom HTML code that you need to use, in which case you would ignore the **Image URL** and **Click URL** fields and instead check on the **Use HTML?** field and enter the custom HTML code into the **Code HTML** field.

Managing Images

System Admin | Image Manager will show the following page, which allows you to create a category of images and then add images into that category. This category and the set of images can then be used by modules that require images. An example is the **extcal** calendar module, which displays images above a monthly calendar.

Image Manager	
Add Image Category:	
Category Name:	
Select groups for image manager use: These are groups allowed to use the image manager for selecting images but not uploading. Webmaster has automatic access.	Webmasters Registered Users Anonymous Users
Select groups allowed to upload images: Typical usage is for moderator and admin groups.	Webmasters Registered Users Anonymous Users
Max size allowed (bytes):	50000
Max width allowed (pixels):	120
Max height allowed (pixels):	120
Display order in image manager:	0
Display this category?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Images are uploaded to: This can not be changed afterwards!	☒ Store as files (in uploads directory) ☐ Store in the database (as binary "blob" data)
Submit	

Images that are uploaded and organized by the **Image Manager** can be retrieved for use throughout your site. When creating a new image category, you must specify the **Category Name** under which the images will be stored and retrieved on your site, who has the permission to manage this category (for example, to use images in this category), who has the permission to upload images into this category, the maximum image dimensions, and maximum file size for images.

Note that the **Add Image File** section is shown on the **Image Manager** screen only after a category is created to house images. Let me explain some of the fields shown on the **Add Image File** section, so you know how to use them:

- Under the **Add Image File** section, **Display order in image manager** is used to set the order in which categories appear in the **Image Manager** drop-down box.
- Display **this image** is set to **Yes** by default. Setting **Display this Image** to **No** will hide the image from people when they access this category from the user side.

The following screenshot shows the **Add Image File** section on the **Image Manager** page:

Add Image File	
Name:	
Category:	GeneralImages ▾
Image file:	Browse...
Display order in image manager:	0
Display this image?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Submit	

Managing Smilies

Smilies are little images that people can use to express themselves. Smilies can be inserted anywhere in the text of an article, comment, or post from both the user and admin sides of the XOOPS system. **System Admin | Smilies** will show the page shown overleaf, which allows you to add special shortcut codes for images. These shortcuts can then be used in message posts and forums, where they will be replaced with the corresponding images when your post is displayed on the website. For example, the code `:-)` will display an icon, or smilie, that shows a face with a smile. You can create new smilies by entering a unique code and uploading a corresponding smilie or image. The **Display in Form?** option will allow the administrator to either show or hide this image/smilie in submission forms (where the user enters some data and submits it to your site).

Smilies Control				
Code	Smilie	Description:	Display in form?	Action
:D		Very Happy	☒	Edit Delete
:~)		Smile	☒	Edit Delete
:-(		Sad	☒	Edit Delete
:o		Surprised	☒	Edit Delete
:~?		Confused	☒	Edit Delete
8~)		Cool	☒	Edit Delete
:lol:		Laughing	☒	Edit Delete
:~x		Mad	☒	Edit Delete
:~P		Razz	☒	Edit Delete
:oops:		Embaressed	☐	Edit Delete
:cry:		Crying (very sad)	☐	Edit Delete
:evil:		Evil or Very Mad	☐	Edit Delete
:roll:		Rolling Eyes	☐	Edit Delete
;~)		Wink	☐	Edit Delete
:pint:		Another pint of beer	☐	Edit Delete
:hammer:		ToolTimes at work	☐	Edit Delete
:idea:		I have an idea	☐	Edit Delete
Submit				

Managing User Avatars

Avatars add a bit of 'visual identification' to users and are often used next to a username, when they post messages or comments on your website. **System Admin | Avatars** will show the following page, which allows you to add avatars. **System Avatars** are images uploaded by the site administrator in the **Avatar Manager** section. **Custom Avatars** are images uploaded by a user to create avatars that they prefer. For a user to be able to upload an avatar, the user must be granted permission to do so.

Avatar Manager

- System Avatars (0 images) [List]
- Custom Avatars (0 images) [List]

Add Avatar

Name:	
Image file:	Browse...
Display order in image manager:	0
Display this image?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Submit	

The **Display order in image manager** field is used by the image manager to sort avatars. If **Display this image?** is set to **No**, the avatar will not be displayed to the user in the list of avatars the user can choose from.

Managing Templates and Themes

System Admin | Templates will show the following page, which allows you to add new templates to your website. Templates allow you to change the way content is displayed within the themes used on your website. This will be covered in more detail in Chapter 6. Suffice it to say that the **Template Set Manager** allows you to add, delete, edit, and duplicate the HTML templates that control block and module layout.

Template Set Manager

Name	Created	Templates	Action	
default XOOPS Default Template Set	2006/9/27	- News [List (15)] - System [List (27)] - Polls [List (4)]	[Download] [Clone]	✓

Upload a template set

Choose a template set package to upload Must be a tar.gz/.tar file with a valid XOOPS template set structure	Browse...
New template set name Enter a template set name for this package. Leave it blank for automatic detection.	
Upload	

Managing Comments

System Admin | Comments will show the following page, which allows you to show, edit, and delete comments posted by users of your website. This allows you to remove or edit offensive comments to avoid inappropriate words, although policies should be set up and displayed for users to follow when posting comments on your website to avoid offending anyone. Each module using the XOOPS comments system has a configuration option (accessed via the **Modules Settings** page) where you can specify whether or not comments are automatically approved, need to have moderator approval before being shown to any other users, or are disabled altogether. The **Comment Manager** allows the site administrator to edit and delete any comment that has been generated by any module that supports the comments feature. Some filter options are available, as shown in the three combo-box menus as follows, that allow the site administrator to show only those comments that need to be managed. For example:

- The **Module** dropdown can be used to select a particular module, and then display comments that were posted only in that module.
- The **Status** dropdown can be used to display comments that have a particular status. The status can be any of the following:
 - **Pending:** New comments posted are in the pending state until they are activated by the site administrator, so that they can be displayed on the site. Automatic activation of comments can be set in the preferences for each module that supports comments.
 - **Active:** This means that these comments have been approved by the site administrator, and are displayed on the website.
 - **Hidden:** This means that these comments are not shown on the site because the site administrator has set their status to hidden. As with the pending option, hidden comments are not shown on the website.

Comment Manager

All modules ▼ Any status ▼ 50 ▼ Go!

List Comments							
	Title	Posted	Poster	IP	Module	Status	
	Re: Podcast Directories	2006/10/1 3:11	admin	127.0.0.1	News	Active	Edit Delete

1 comment(s) found.

Summary

In this chapter, we have covered many administration tasks that you will perform when you manage your site. We have gone over how to manage users and groups, adding and activating new modules, adding and positioning blocks, and various other tasks that involve managing banners, images, etc. Please experiment with these administration tasks until you understand how to use them, and under which circumstances they make sense.

5

Creating Your Own Themes

Many themes are available from various sources for XOOPS. To pick one, you just need to decide the type of website you wish to have, e.g. either related to fitness, music, or sports.

We will look at what a theme is, how to install one, and then take a two-pronged approach to creating our own themes:

- Modify an existing theme to create a customized version suitable for your website
- Create a brand new theme

As before, we will install themes and show how they work on our demo website at `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com`.

What is a Theme?

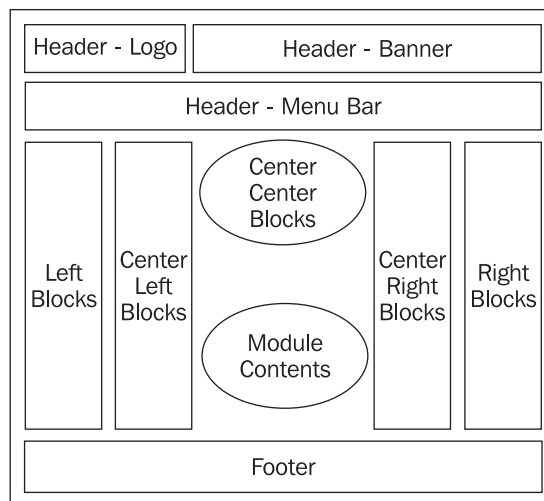
A theme defines the general look and feel of a XOOPS site. The theme, or skin, allows the separation of code that runs in the background of the site from the way information is presented to the user. The benefit of this is that an administrator (or user with sufficient privileges) can easily change the look of a site by simply selecting a new theme and then applying it.

From a developer's perspective, a XOOPS theme consists of a set of files in a **theme** folder where XOOPS is installed. The following screenshot shows the basic structure of this folder:

Remote Site: /public_html/xoopsbook/themes/newtheme/						
Filename	Filesize	Filetype	Date	Time	Permissions	
..						
images		File Folder	15/05/2006	21:45	drwxr-xr-x	
style.css	4977	Cascading ...	15/05/2006	22:19	-rw-r--r--	
styleMAC.css	77	Cascading ...	15/05/2006	22:19	-rw-r--r--	
styleNN.css	90	Cascading ...	15/05/2006	22:19	-rw-r--r--	
theme.html	2279	HTML File	15/05/2006	22:19	-rw-r--r--	
theme_blockcenter_c.html	146	HTML File	15/05/2006	22:19	-rw-r--r--	
theme_blockcenter_l.html	158	HTML File	15/05/2006	22:19	-rw-r--r--	
theme_blockcenter_r.html	158	HTML File	15/05/2006	22:19	-rw-r--r--	
theme_blockleft.html	97	HTML File	15/05/2006	22:19	-rw-r--r--	
theme_blockright.html	97	HTML File	15/05/2006	22:19	-rw-r--r--	

As you can see, the folder has an **images** folder that contains the images used by the theme, plus a few key files such as **style.css** (that will control the layout and format of the various elements of the theme, e.g. fonts), **theme.html** (that controls the overall layout and structure of the theme, e.g. whether to use a header, footer, left block, right block, center block, or all), as well as files for the various blocks of the theme that will be used.

The following diagram shows graphically the parts of the page that are changed by these files:



The header and footer sections can be changed using the main `theme.html` and `style.css` files.

Note that in XOOPS, templates are not the same as themes. Themes define the structure and layout of the entire site, and common elements in all pages, such as page colors, banners, width of left column, and if a header or footer bar exists. Templates control the design and layout of page elements, such as blocks (e.g. Main Menu, User Menu, and Recent Topics), custom blocks, and module content (e.g. index page of News). In addition, themes are changed using an HTML editor and FTP client, such as Filezilla. Templates are changed inside the XOOPS admin control panel.

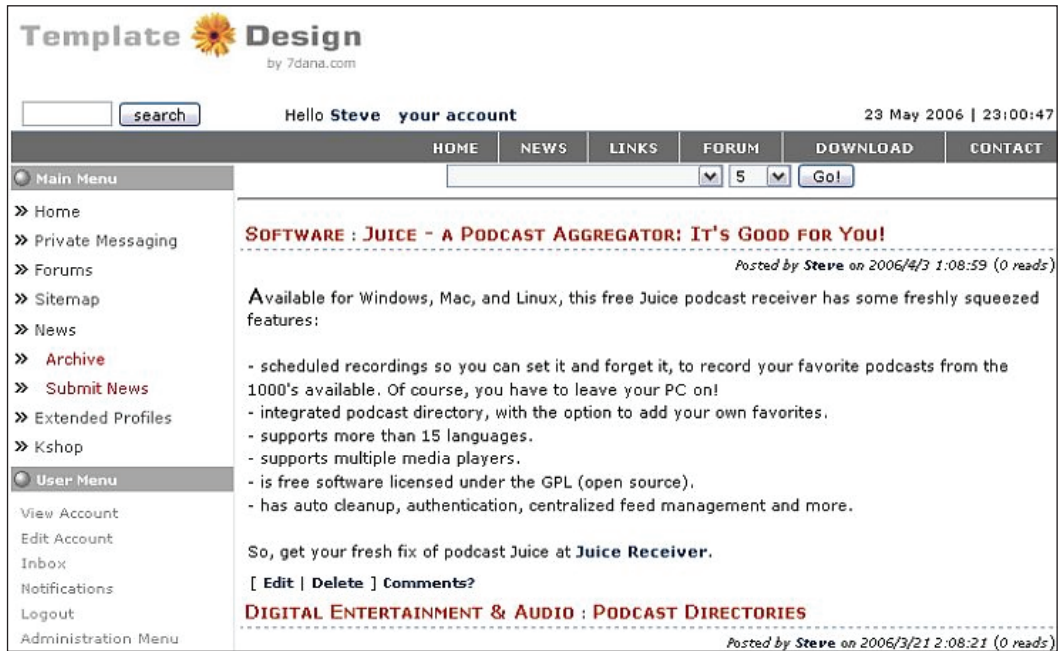
A visit to the XOOPS website shows that a few themes are more popular than the rest. For example, the top themes as of this writing are 4whitebusiness (mostly designed for business), 7dana-clean, alightFC, 4thefort, imago06, 7dana-Xred, aquaum, 4colorbiz, blue_lagoon, and EADJ2.1.

You can try any of these by simply downloading them, uncompressing the files, and copying them into your themes folder on your website, as shown in the previous chapters. Selecting a theme that is suitable for your particular website is a matter of both personal taste and functionality, e.g. do you wish to display information on your website in two columns, or do you have so much information that a three-column theme is necessary? Do you like a particular color scheme, or do certain fonts seem more suitable for your website?

As you can see, at some point in time, you will have the urge to change the look and feel of your website. Since XOOPS uses themes, you can accomplish this by finding a suitable theme online, either free or from a commercial vendor specializing in creating themes.

Following are the screenshots of some of the themes mentioned here to give you an idea of the variety that is available for free download and use. You will have to determine if any of them meet your particular requirements.

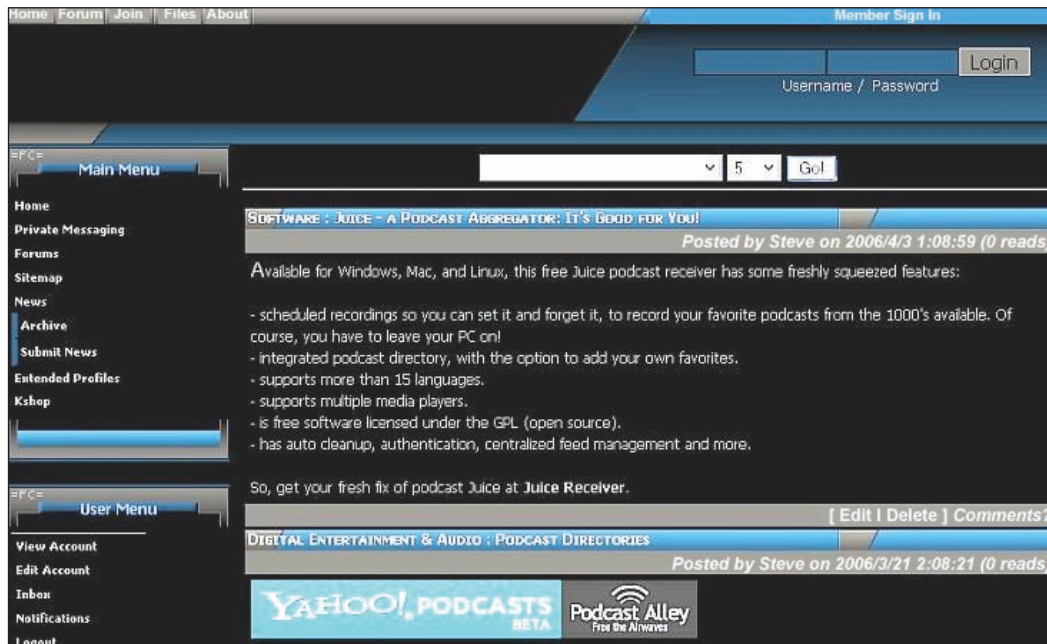
- The 7dana-clean theme



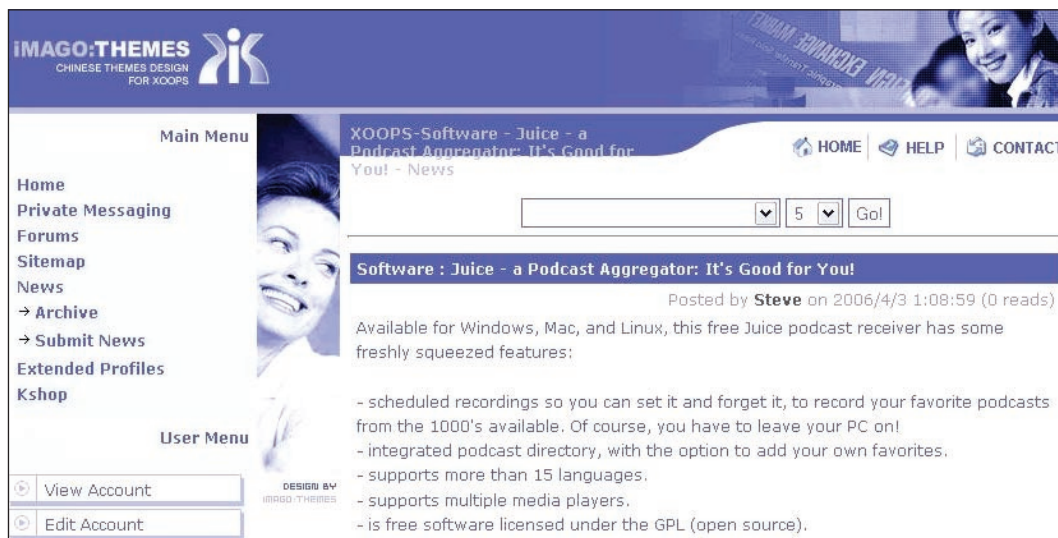
- The alightFC theme



- The 4thefort theme



- The imago06 theme



Installing a New Theme

XOOPS comes with several themes that allow you to change the look and feel of your new website with a few mouse-clicks. We will again use our demo website `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com` to demonstrate how to change the theme and show the changes.

To change the theme, we will download the **Blue Shine** theme from the website at <http://www.xoopsdesign.com/modules/PDdownloads/viewcat.php?op=&cid=1>.

Please note that you cannot download this theme until you first register at this website by creating a user ID and password, responding to the email you receive after registration, and then logging into the website with your new user ID and password.

At this point, we will assume that you know how to unzip a file using zipGenius (or WinZip) and use Filezilla to upload the uncompressed files to your website. So, unzip the **Blue Shine** theme and upload the entire **blue_shine** folder (located inside the `xoops_theme_blue_shine\XOOPS theme` folder when you unzip the **Blue Shine** theme file) to the location `/public_html/xoopsbook/themes/` on your website. This is assuming, of course, that XOOPS for our website `http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com` is installed in `/public_html/xoopsbook/`.

Note that you can also upload the template files using the XOOPS administration menu at **System Admin | Templates** as long as the file is of the format `tar.gz` or `.tar`.

Once the folder has been uploaded, select and activate the new theme from the XOOPS web-based administration interface as follows:

- Navigate to **System Admin | Preferences | General Settings**.
- Change **Default Theme** to **blue_shine**.
- Optionally, also change **Selectable Themes** so that only **blue_shine** is selected. This prevents users from changing the theme to something else and is needed if you wish to allow only one common theme for your website.

Now, you should see something like the following:



At this point, you will notice that you need to change the following parts of the theme to tune it to your needs:

- Menus across the top of the website, e.g. you may not need the **Downloads** menu or the **Articles** menu, if you do not wish to use the article or the WF-Downloads modules
- Website logo across the top of the website, which may in fact, be composed of several smaller images.
- Fonts and colors used, e.g. you may like the layout but might feel that a different font is to your liking.

To remove menus, edit the `theme.html` file located at `/public_html/xoopsbook/themes/blue_shine/theme.html`, and scroll down until you see the following code. We will remove the highlighted lines below, which will leave only the **Home**, **News**, and **Forum** menus:

```
<td id="headmenu"><a class="menuHead"
href="{<{$xoops_url}>}/index.php">Home</a></td>
<td class="separator"></td>
<td id="headmenu" ><a class="menuHead"
href="{<{$xoops_url}>}/modules/news/">News</a></td>
```

```
<td class="separator"></td>
<td id="headmenu"><a class="menuHead"
href="{<{$xoops_url}>/modules/wfdownloads/">Downloads</a></td>
<td class="separator"></td>
<td id="headmenu"><a class="menuHead"
href="{<{$xoops_url}>/modules/newbb/">Forum</a></td>
<td class="separator"></td>
<td id="headmenu"><a class="menuHead"
href="{<{$xoops_url}>/modules/article/">Articles</a></td>
<td class="separator"></td>
<td id="headmenu"><a class="menuHead"
href="{<{$xoops_url}>/modules/mylinks/">Links</a> </td>
```

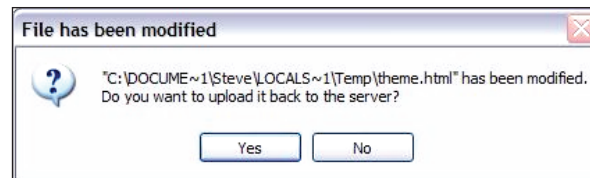
Note that in the preceding code, there is one extra / after the `<{$xoops_imageurl}>`. However, this is how the developer coded this theme and we can remove that extra / ourselves if we want to ensure that the code is totally correct, but the image will still be displayed with the extra / there.

We will also remove the large XOOPS banner at the bottom of the page by navigating to **System Admin | Banners** and removing the **Advertising Client** named **XOOPS**. Now, you should see something like the following:



As a hint, you can edit files on your website using Filezilla by setting the options within it to open a file on the website host using your favorite text editor. To do this for Notepad, open Filezilla and select **Edit | Settings | Interface Settings | File Viewing/Editing** and set **Default program to view or edit a file** as **C:\WINDOWS\NOTEPAD.EXE**; then, when you connect to your website using Filezilla, simply right-click on the file `/public_html/xoopsbook/themes/blue_shine/theme.html` and select **View/Edit**, which will then automatically download a copy of `theme.html` and open it within Notepad.

When you are done editing the file, save it within Notepad (or, if you specified another editor, save the file within that program), close Notepad, and switch back to Filezilla, which will prompt you to upload the saved file back to the server; just select **Yes** to do so. The following screenshot shows the prompt we receive within Filezilla after removing the preceding lines of code from `theme.html`, saving the file within Notepad, and then closing Notepad.



Note that the changes you have made to `theme.html` and `style.css` may not be reflected on your site. This may be because in **System Admin | Preferences | General Settings** the value for **Check templates for modifications ?** may be **No**. I would recommend you keep this value set to **Yes**, until you have finished editing your theme, at which point set it back to **No** since it will improve performance. Changes to themes are reflected on your site only when the template file is updated.

Changing the logo is a matter of finding the logo image file used by the theme and uploading your own image file to replace it. Changing fonts and colors will be covered in the next section. The default logo image for this theme is located at `/public_html/xoopsbook/themes/blue_shine/images/logo.gif` and looks as follows:



All you need to do to change the logo is create an image of the same height and width, give it the same name and upload the file back to the same location on the website. Note that you need to save this file in the same file format, i.e. `.gif` in this case, as the original. You can use your favorite image-editing software for this; even the Paint program that comes with Microsoft Windows XP will suffice; however, you can also use Gimp (both on Windows and Linux).

Free and commercial themes can be downloaded from various places on the Internet, including the following websites:

- <http://astonthemes.com>
- <http://www.xoopsdesign.com>
- <http://www.7dana.com>
- <http://www.dcdezines.ca>

Customizing an Existing Theme

We will take the most popular theme, as indicated on the XOOPS website, namely **4whitebusiness**, and show you how to customize it.

Navigate to the www.xoops.org website, and under **Community** select the **Theme Library**. Then click on **Popular** to see the list of most popular themes. Download the **4whitebusiness** theme and extract the file using zipGenius (or WinZip). Then, we will:

- Upload the **4whitebusiness** folder to our `/public_html/xoopsbook/themes/` folder.
- Log into XOOPS on our website and then set the theme **4whitebusiness** as the **default** to be used by visitors to the website.

We will now customize this theme to show you how to change common elements such as:

- Site logo
- Font
- Colors
- Layout

Following is a screenshot of the **4whitebusiness** theme as it appears on our demo website <http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com> before any modifications:



Changing the Site Logo

Before you can create a new site logo, you must ensure that the logo has the same size, i.e. width and height. The best way to do this is open the existing site logo, located at `/public_html/xoopsbook/themes/4whitebusiness/logo.jpg`, in your favorite image viewer or image editor and check the size.

To accomplish this in the freeware software program IrfanView (downloadable from most freeware websites such as www.softpedia.com), select **Image | Resize/Resample**, which will show you the existing size of the image in pixels, and allow you to modify the size of the image to the same dimensions as the original `logo.jpg`. You may have to tweak it a little by adding filler space. If you don't resize the image, the image may appear too large or too small to fit into the theme header, and the rest of the theme elements will also not be aligned properly.

The logo for the 4whitebusiness theme has the following dimensions:

- Width: 400 pixels
- Height: 100 pixels

The following screenshot shows the original logo image:



Then, use your favorite image editor to create another image of the exact size, shown as follows:



Now, using Filezilla:

1. Navigate to the 4whitebusiness theme directory, i.e. `/public_html/xoopsbook/themes/4whitebusiness`.
2. Upload the new `logo.jpg` image into the `/public_html/xoopsbook/themes/4whitebusiness` folder and overwrite the existing one (or rename the existing file first if you would like to revert back to it later). And that is all!

Changing the Font

After a while, you may start to get tired of the Verdana and Arial fonts combination you see everywhere. Modifying the fonts used by a theme is as easy as making a few changes to the theme stylesheet.

Typically, the main stylesheet will be called `style.css`. In this particular case, paragraph content uses Verdana while headers use Arial. Instead, we want to use Helvetica for content and Times New Roman for the headers. So, to accomplish this:

1. Open `style.css`.
2. Scroll down to the fourth line that starts with:

```
table td {padding: 0; border-width: 0; font-family: Verdana,
Tahoma, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;}
```

3. Change this line so that the fonts listed after font-family are:

```
font-family: Helvetica, Verdana, Tahoma, Arial, sans-serif;
```

4. Scroll down to the line that starts with:

```
th {color: #000000; padding : 2px; vertical-align : middle;
font-family: Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif;}
```

5. Change the fonts listed after font-family to:

```
font-family: "Times New Roman", serif;
```

Now, because the content has been changed to Arial, it looks slightly too small. We will increase the font size to make it more legible. So, we scroll down to the following selectors and change the **font-size** property to 1.2em:

- table td line:

```
table td {padding: 0; border-width: 0; font-family: Helvetica,
Verdana, Tahoma, Arial, sans-serif;font-size:1.2em;}
```
- th line:

```
th {color: #000000; padding : 2px; vertical-align : middle;
font-family: "Times New Roman", serif;}
```
- td#centerCcolumn div.blockContent line:

```
td#centerCcolumn div.blockContent { padding: 3px;
margin-right: 0px;margin-left: 0px; margin-bottom: 2px;
font-size: 1.2em; line-height: 90%; text-align: left;}
```
- td#centerLcolumn div.blockContent line:

```
td#centerLcolumn div.blockContent {padding: 3px; margin-left:
3px; margin-right: 2px; margin-bottom: 2px; font-size: 1.2em;
line-height: 120%;}
```
- td#centerRcolumn div.blockContent line:

```
td#centerRcolumn div.blockContent {padding: 3px;
margin-left: 2px;
margin-right: 3px;
margin-bottom: 2px;
font-size: 1.2em;
line-height: 120%;}
```

Then, we remove the `font-size: x-small` property from these columns, so that it doesn't conflict with the new font size that was defined (1.2em):

- `td#rightcolumn div.Blockcontent`
- `td#leftcolumn div.blockContent`
- `td#mainmenu a.<various elements>`

Changing the Colors

You have now changed the site logo and altered the fonts to better fit the ideal look of your website. However, the colors still do not look quite right. Fortunately, the theme stylesheet will allow you to change the colors of your website also.

Let's say that you want to change the color of the left column to accent the header:

- Find the `td#leftcolumn` selector.
- Add the following property, which changes the color to blue-gray:
`background-color: #A2B2C1;`

And then, to push people to read the center column, we'll subdue the right column by changing the color of the column partition to light-gray:

- Find the `td#rightcolumn` selector.
- Add the following property: `background-color: #eeeeee;`

Changing the Layout

As a result of modifying the font size, the box in the center-right column is making contact with the left column. It looks like the two columns are running into each other. We need more whitespace. To do this, we'll need to make some changes to one of the theme-layout files.

- Open `theme_blockcenter_1.html`.
- In the first `<table>` tag, add a style attribute to provide a wider margin:
`style="margin-left: 4px;"`
- Thus, the second line in the file looks like:

```
<table border="0" width="100%" cellpadding="4" style="margin-left: 4px;">
```

This will add some whitespace, making the template appear less cramped and more polished.

Following is a list of all the layout files that you can modify, which correspond to the various sections of a page as shown in the graphical diagram earlier in this chapter:

- `theme_blockleft.html`
- `theme_blockcenter_l.html`
- `theme_blockcenter_c.html`
- `theme_blockcenter_r.html`
- `theme_blockright.html`

Each of these template files is responsible for generating a part of the page. `theme_blockleft.html` and `theme_blockright.html` generate the left and right columns, while the center block templates (`theme_blockcenter_l.html`, `theme_blockcenter_c.html`, and `theme_blockcenter_r.html`) generate the left, center, and right portions of the center column. As a result, XOOPS actually uses a five-column layout.

We have covered the basics of customizing a XOOPS theme. The XOOPS themes are designed to be easy to modify. We discussed changing the site logo, the fonts, the colors, and even the spacing. Delving deeper into this will allow you to drastically change XOOPS themes and make them closer to your ideal vision of your website.

Creating a New Theme

We will now take you through creating a brand new theme. This is not as hard as it seems, and may be necessary to create a truly unique look for your website. We will show you how to create the major parts of a theme.

However, we will put a twist to things; rather than just walk you through creating a new theme, step by step, we will convert the Mollio theme from www.mollio.org into a XOOPS theme. The reasons for this are:

- It will give you the foundation to convert themes from other content management systems to XOOPS, and thus contribute to the XOOPS community if you decide to share these creations.
- It will let you build new themes more easily, without having to reinvent the wheel.

In the previous section, we showed you how to modify an existing XOOPS theme. Now, we will convert a non-XOOPS theme into a XOOPS theme.

To get started, you will need to download the Mollio theme package file from <http://www.mollio.org>, or from our demo website at http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com/mollio_version1.1.zip.

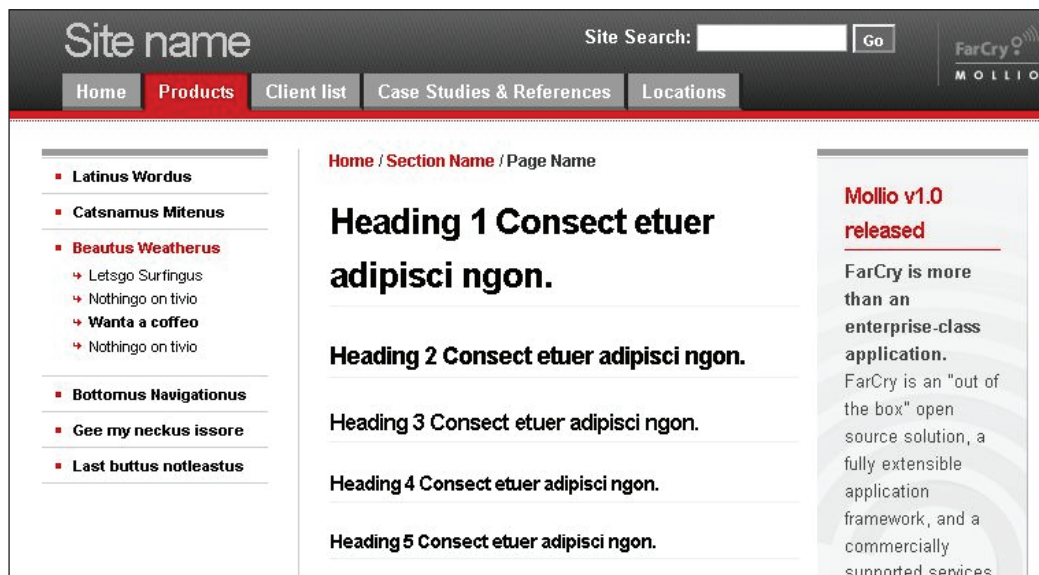
The template is freely available, and modifiable, under several licenses:

- Creative Commons: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/>
- GPL: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/GPL/2.0/>
- CPL: <http://www.opensource.org/licenses/cpl1.0.php>

Extract the theme package into a folder called **Mollio**, and decide which version of the template files to use. We have decided to use the **Type C** theme style, which has the following features:

- Type C: 3 columns Main, Left-hand navigation, and Right Sidebar

The following screenshot shows what this theme looks like:

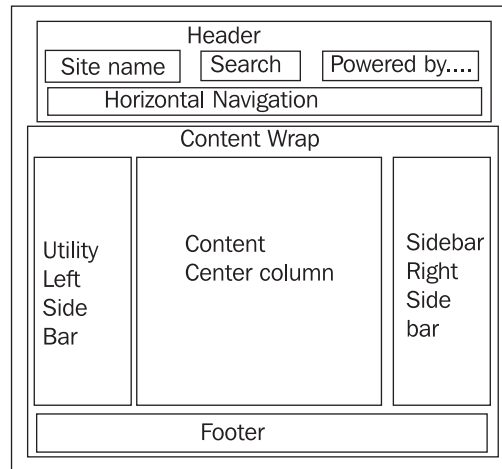


Open the `typec.html` template file and remove all the content (it simply demonstrates the styles for each CSS class and ID). You will be left with basic page containers for:

- Header
 - Site Name
 - Search
 - Horizontal Navigation
- Content Wrap
 - Utility (left side bar)

- Content (center column)
- Sidebar (right side bar)
- Footer (for content area)
- Poweredby (Mollio logo that appears in the top-right of the page)

To see the above visually, take a look at the following figure:



Next, create a new folder called **MX** for your Mollio XOOPS theme. Then:

- Copy `typec.html` into **MX** and rename it to `theme.html`.
- Copy all stylesheets from the subfolder `/css` into **MX**.
- Rename `main.css` to `style.css`.
- Copy the following folders to the **MX** folder:
 - Images
 - Js
 - Wsimages

Copy all images from the `/css/images` subfolder in the Mollio folder to the **MX/images** folder.

Header

Open the file `theme.html`, and place the following tags in the **HEAD** section:

```
<meta http-equiv="content-type" content="text/html;
                                     charset=<{$xoops_charset}>" />
```

```
<meta http-equiv="content-language" content="<{$xoops_langcode}>" />
<meta name="robots" content="<{$xoops_meta_robots}>" />
<meta name="keywords" content="<{$xoops_meta_keywords}>" />
<meta name="description" content="<{$xoops_meta_description}>" />
<meta name="rating" content="<{$xoops_meta_rating}>" />
<meta name="author" content="<{$xoops_meta_author}>" />
<meta name="copyright" content="<{$xoops_meta_copyright}>" />
<meta name="generator" content="XOOPS" />
<title><{$xoops_sitename}> - <{$xoops_pagetitle}></title>
<link href="<{$xoops_url}>/favicon.ico" rel="SHORTCUT ICON" />
```

Add references to your stylesheets and Mollio Js:

```
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="<{$xoops_themecss}>"
media="screen" />
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" href="<{$xoops_url}>/themes/MX/
print.css" media="print" />

<!--[if lte IE 6]>
<link rel="stylesheet" type="text/css"
      href="<{$xoops_url}>/themes/MX/ie6_or_less.css" />
<![endif]-->
<script type="text/javascript" src="<{$xoops_url}>/themes/MX/js/
common.js"></script>
```

Display the site name in the template **site-name div**:

```
<div id="site-name"><{$xoops_sitename}></div>
```

In the **search div**, change the form action to point to the XOOPS search script:

```
<form action="<{$xoops_url}>/search.php">
```

Populate the horizontal nav strip with links to XOOPS modules:

```
<ul id="nav">
<li class="first"><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/">Home</a></li>
<li><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/modules/mydownloads/">Files</a></li>
<li><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/modules/xoopsfaq/">FAQ</a></li>
<li><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/modules/contact/">Contact Us</a></li>
<li class="last"><a href="<{$xoops_url}>/modules/newbb/">Forums</a></li>
</ul>
```

In the **content-wrap** container, look at the **utility div**. Delete all of the content within the **utility div** and add the following to display left-side XOOPS content:

```
<{foreach item=block from=$xoops_lblocks}>
<h4><{$block.title}></h4>
<{$block.content}>
</foreach>
```

The preceding code tells XOOPS to populate the HTML container with all the modules assigned to the left column of the page (therefore, it would make sense for this code to be in the left column of the HTML template). There is a corresponding block of code for each column in the template.

As of version 2.0, XOOPS has been using the Smarty template engine, which means that themes will have Smarty tags embedded in the HTML code, as in the previous code. Smarty tags are delimited by `<{` and `>`. Thus, in the preceding code, following are the Smarty tags:

- `<{$block.title}>`
- `<{$block.content}>`

One benefit of making use of Smarty tags is that they speed up site loading because content of these tags have already been processed and compiled. Thus, there is no need to create your own custom code to get the site URL, the theme folder, etc. Instead use a Smarty tag. To find out more about the Smarty template engine, visit the Smarty website at <http://smarty.php.net>, or refer to the book *Smarty PHP Template Programming and Applications* from Packt Publishing (ISBN 1-904811-40-X).

Content

In the content container, delete all the existing content (with the exception of the footer container), and add the following code to display XOOPS modules assigned to the center-center column. Note that in this modification of the Mollio template, only center-center content is displayed (no code has been included to show center-right or center-left content):

```
<{foreach item=block from=$xoops_ccblocks}>
<h2><{$block.title}></h2>
<{$block.content}>
</foreach>
```

In the footer container, add the following line:

```
<p><{$xoops_meta_copyright}> By <{$xoops_sitename}><br />All
trademarks used are properties of their respective owners. All rights
reserved.</p>
```

Content on the right side of the page appears within the `featurebox` class; mostly, because I think it looks pretty good, and differentiates it from the other content on the page. The XOOPS right-column content appears within this container, which is called **sidebar** in the Mollio template. The right-side content is displayed with this code:

```
<{foreach item=block from=$xoops_rblocks}>
<div class="featurebox">
```

```
<h3><{$block.title}></h3>
<{$block.content}>
</div>
<{/foreach}>
```

The last step requires us to make some additions to the `style.css` stylesheet. These additions will allow the left-side vertical menu to work as it does in the static HTML-based Mollio template:

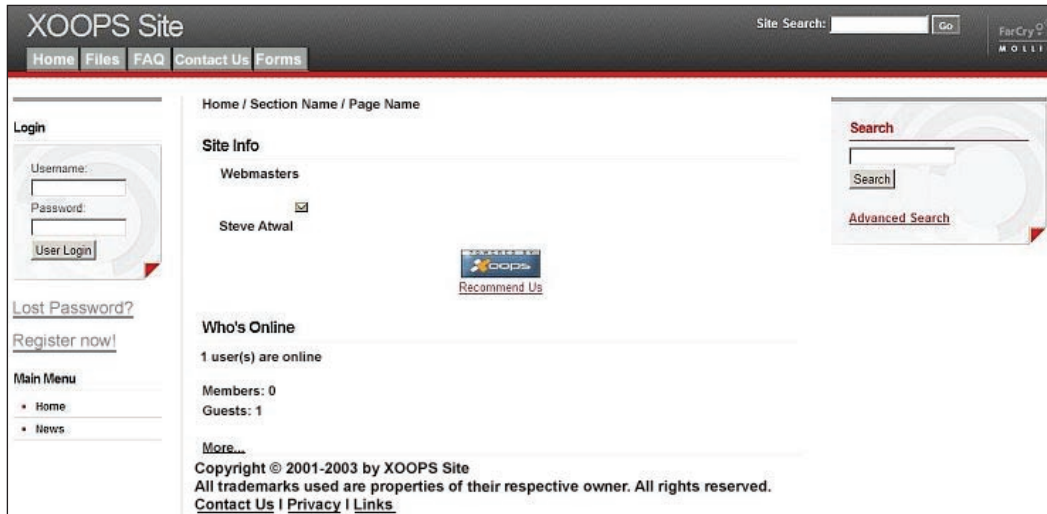
```
#usermenu a:link, a.menuMain:link, a.menuTop:link, #usermenu a:
visited, a.menuMain:visited, a.menuTop:visited, #usermenu a:hover,
a.menuMain:hover, a.menuTop:hover, #usermenu a:active, a.menuMain:
active, a.menuTop:active {
display: block;
width: auto;
padding: 0 0 0 25px;
background: #fff url("images/sprites.gif") no-repeat 10px -695px;
text-decoration: none;
font-weight: bold;
font-size: 0.9em;
line-height: 1.9;
color: #000;
border-top: 1px solid #fff;
border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc;}

a.menuMain:hover, a.menuTop:hover {
color:#c00;
background: #fee url("images/sprites.gif") no-repeat 10px -695px;
text-decoration: none;}

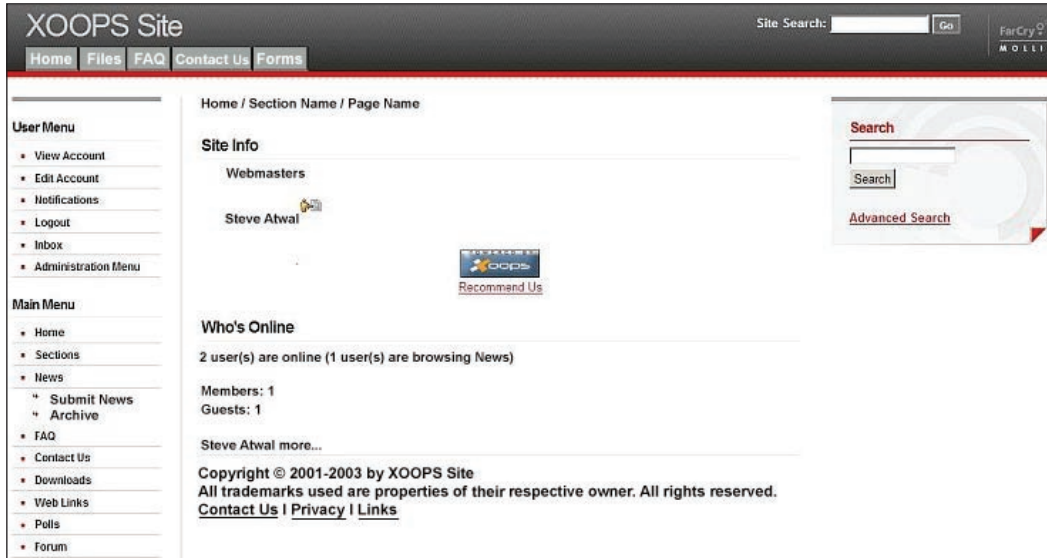
a.menuSub:link, a.menuSub:visited, a.menuSub:hover, a.menuSub:active {
display: block;
width: auto;
margin: 0 0 0 23px;
padding: 0 0 0 23px;
background: #fff url("images/sprites.gif") no-repeat 0 -798px;
text-decoration: none;
font-weight: normal;
font-size: 0.8em;
line-height: 1.9;
color: #000;}
a.menuSub:hover {
color:#c00;
background: #fff url("images/sprites.gif") no-repeat 0 -798px;
text-decoration: none;}
```

So, we have just gone through converting a theme from Mollio to XOOPS. We have changed three key areas of the theme: header, content (including footer), and the "Powered by..." logo. We have shown the site name, search, and navigation menu at

the top of the page, as well as added left-column, right-column, and center-content areas. Following are some screenshots of the new theme in action:



After a user logs in, the login section on the left column will disappear as shown in the following screenshot:



Summary

In this chapter, we have shown you what a theme is, how to install one, how to modify an existing XOOPS theme to customize it to your needs, and how to create a brand-new XOOPS theme. There is a lot more that you can only know by experimenting, such as the Smarty template engine and the various tags available for you to use, but you should have the foundation and confidence to start creating your own themes. Unless, of course, you would rather have someone else design themes for you, in which case there are many commercial sources you can turn to.

In case you want to try the new theme we created in this chapter, you can download it from <http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com/MX.zip>.

6

Popular Modules

There are many modules available for extending the functionality of XOOPS. The main source of these modules is the XOOPS website at www.xoops.org. We will pick a module from each major category listed at the XOOPS website, and show you how to install it and set some custom values. The beauty of this is that you do not need to have any programming skills to accomplish this. We will look at the following categories of modules, which have been selected based on a combination of popularity and user ratings at the XOOPS website:

- Communication
- Information
- Date and Time
- Image Galleries
- Entertainment
- Navigation
- Community
- E-Commerce

We will install modules and show how they work on our demo website at xoopsbook.steveatwal.com.

Communication

The modules for communication are those that allow users to interact with each other, or those that allow you to collect information from your visitors, such as contact forms and polls. We will install the following module as an example:

- Name: Liaise
- Version: 1.26 (note that version 1.5 is not compatible with XOOPS 2.0.15)

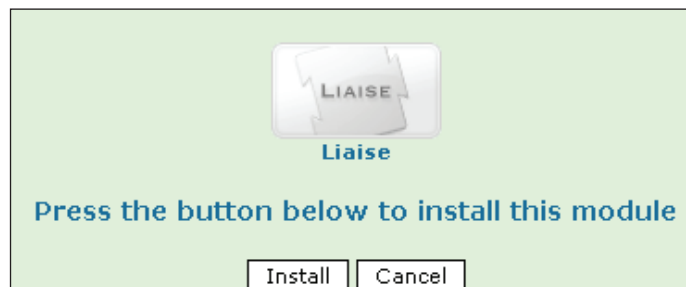
- URL: <http://www.brandycoke.com/products/liaise/>
- Description: Liaise is a module for XOOPS that provides customizable contact forms, using form elements such as checkboxes and radio buttons.

For additional communication-related modules, visit the XOOPS website.

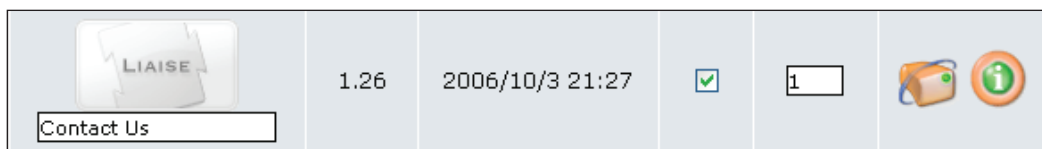
The first step will be to install the module onto our demo website as follows:

- Extract the file using any software for unzipping files.
- Upload the Liaise folder to the `/public_html/xoopsbook/modules/` folder on your site using your FTP client.
- Log into XOOPS on your website and then install Liaise and activate it.

Note that after installing the module, we can allow everyone to use the forms generated by this module, but only Webmasters can create/change/delete the forms. The following screenshot shows the install module page:



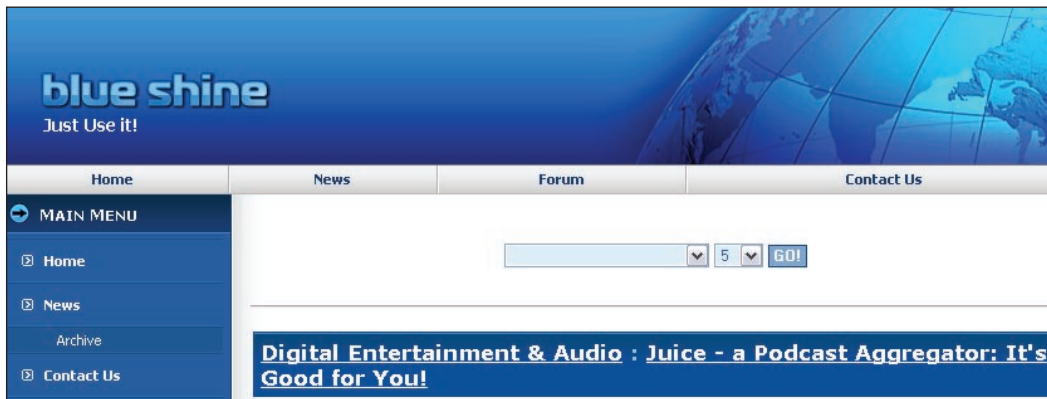
After the module is installed, the first thing we will do is change the name that is displayed on the menu for this module. The following screenshot illustrates this:



We will also change the menu link that appears across the top of our website for the theme we have used so that it points to this new module. First note that we have installed a new theme called **Blue Shine** from **xoopsdesign.com** as outlined in Chapter 5. Now we will add the **Contact** menu item for this theme as follows. We will change the file `/public_html/xoopsbook/themes/blue_shine/theme.html` to add:

```
<td class="separator"></td>
<td id="headmenu"><a class="menuHead"
href="{<{$xoops_url}>/modules/liaise/">Contact Us</a></td>
```

Thus, the main page for our demo website `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com` will look as follows:



If you click on the link for **Contact Us**, you will be taken to the default form displayed by the Liaise module. To customize this form, navigate to the XOOPS administration menu at **System Admin | Modules | Contact Us | Contact Form Listing**.

As an example, we will change the following settings by clicking on **Edit form settings** for the default form that is listed:

- Title of the default form: **Contact Us**.
- Text to be displayed in the main page if more then one form is listed: **Please use one of the forms below to contact us**.
- Text to be displayed in the form page itself: **Send feedback to us by filling out this form**.

We will then edit the form elements of the default form to hide unwanted fields and make some mandatory changes. To do this, first navigate to **System Admin | Modules | Contact Us** and click on **Contact Form Listing** within the XOOPS administration menu, and then click on **Edit form elements** to see the default fields assigned to a form, as shown in the following screenshot:

Create a form element

Form elements of Contact Us				
Caption / Default value	Required	Order	Display	Action
Your name {UNAME}	☒	0	☒	Edit Clone Delete
Email {EMAIL}	☒	1	☒	Edit Clone Delete
Gender ☐ Male ☐ Female ☒ I won't tell ya	☐	2	☐	Edit Clone Delete
Website http://	☐	3	☒	Edit Clone Delete
Company 	☐	4	☒	Edit Clone Delete
Location 	☒	5	☒	Edit Clone Delete
Comments 	☒	6	☒	Edit Clone Delete

Now, if we scroll down the page in the preceding screenshot, we will see additional form elements and with these we will:

- Uncheck the **Display** option for the fields **Gender**, **How are you today**, **Why did you buy a computer**, **How old are you**, the text field that contains the value starting with "I have no idea what should be placed here", **What are your hobbies**, **Do you believe your government**, **Your credit card number**.
- Check the **Required** and **Display** options for the field **Location**. Note that this may not be a requirement for you; so make only those fields mandatory that you really want someone to fill or the user will not be able to submit the form.

Save the changes and then navigate to your website to view your **Contact Us** link. You will see the following form:

Send feedback to us by filling out this form.

CONTACT Us	
Your name *	Steve
Email *	mail@steveatwal.com
Website	http://
Company	
Location *	
Comments *	
<input type="submit" value="SUBMIT"/>	

* Required

You can also create new forms from scratch by navigating to **System Admin | Modules | Contact Us | Create a New Form**. Some things you should know are:

- Additional new forms will appear on the same link for the Liaise module at <http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com/modules/liaise/>. When you have more than one form, you will see a list of the forms instead of the actual form elements as can be seen in the previous screenshot. You can then click on a form link to display and use the actual form.
- Forms can be created for many different purposes such as submitting a trouble ticket for a help desk, submitting an order for a restaurant, etc. The uses are limited only by your needs and imagination.
- When a user clicks on the **Submit** button, information is gathered by the form and sent as an email to the Site Admin email address.

Information

These modules allow you to display and manage information in an easier way. Modules in this category include those for writing articles and posting news. We will install the following module as an example:

- Name: News
- Version: 1.44
- URL: <http://www.xoops.org/modules/repository/>
- Description: News is a module for XOOPS that allows you to easily post news on your website.

You can find more modules related to Information display and management at the XOOPS website.

As explained in the previous chapter, the first step will be to install the module onto our demo website as follows:

- Extract the file using any unzipping software.
- Upload the News folder to the `/public_html/xoopsbook/modules/` folder on your website using your FTP client.
- Log into XOOPS on your website and then install **News** and activate it.

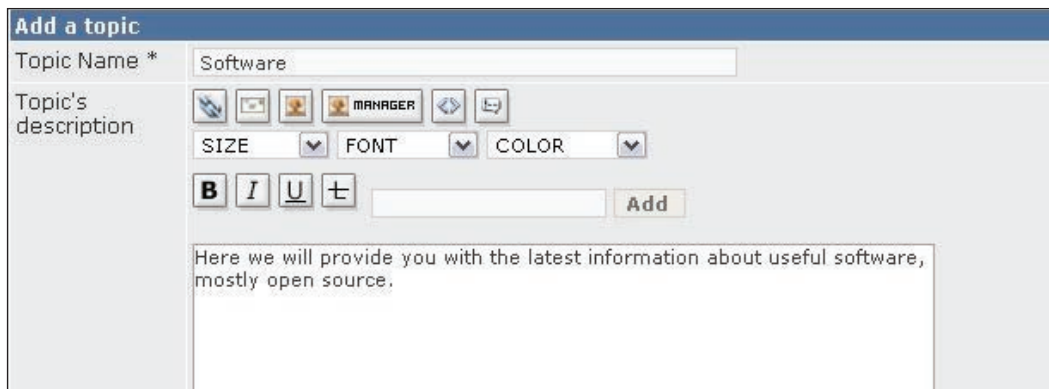
The News module is likely going to be one of the modules you will want to use on your site. So, we will go into detail on how to create and post items into new topics and set the right permissions for others to see what has been posted.

We will go through the steps to show you how to:

- Create a topic
- Post a news item in a topic
- Set viewing permissions on topics
- Prune older news items
- View statistics

Creating Topics

All news items are posted into topics. Thus, the first step will be to create topics into which you will post news items. To create a topic, navigate to **System Admin | Modules | News | Topics Manager** and scroll down to where you can see the **Add a Topic** section, as shown in the following screenshot:



When you create a new topic, you can set certain attributes of the topic such as assign it to a **Parent Topic** (to build a hierarchy of topics), and assign an image to it (that will be shown when the topic is displayed). Once added (using the **add** button), this new **Software** topic (shown in the preceding screenshot) will appear at the top of the **News** module page in a drop-down box as shown in the following screenshot:



Since we made the News module the primary module to be shown for the website `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com` in the previous chapter, using **System Admin | Preferences | General Settings** and changing **Module for your start page** from **None** to **News**, the News module will appear on the main page for `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com`.

Posting News Items

Now that we have created at least one topic, we can post news items. To post news items, navigate to **System Admin | Modules | News | Post/Edit News**, and enter a title and the details of a news item you wish to post. The following screenshot shows a sample post:

Submit News	
Title *	Juice - a Podcast Aggregator: It's Good for You!
Topic	Software
Display Topic Image?	☐ Yes ☒ No
Position	Right
Publish in Home?	☐ No ☒ Yes
Author	Steve
List Search Remove	
The Scoop *	 SIZE FONT COLOR B <i>I</i> <u>U</u>  Add Available for Windows, Mac, and Linux, this free Juice podcast receiver has some freshly squeezed features: - scheduled recordings so you can set it and forget it, to record your favorite podcasts from the 1000's available. Of course, you have to leave your PC on! - integrated podcast directory, with the option to add your own favorites. - supports more than 15 languages. - supports multiple media players. - is free software licensed under the GPL (open source). - has auto cleanup, authentication, centralized feed management and more. So, get your fresh fix of podcast Juice at http://juicereceiver.sourceforge.net Juice Receiver.

Let us look at some of the options available to us when posting a news item using the preceding page:

- **Publish in Home?:** When set to **Yes**, this option ensures that the news item is shown on the home page of the News module; otherwise, the news item will only be shown when the **Software** topic is selected from the drop-down topic box on the home page that the user sees for this module. By default, all news items are shown on the home page.

- **The Scoop:** This is the introductory bit of the news item that is shown on the home page of the module, along with a **Read more...** link below the news item if the **Extended Text** field is used. If you would like to attach an image to your post, a handy image manager link is provided as part of the text-formatting tools. The image manager allows you to either upload a new image and then select it onto the text of the news item, or select a previously uploaded image and post that onto the news item.
- **Extended Text:** If you have a long news item to post, usually you would enter the first few paragraphs into **The Scoop** field and then the rest of the news item into the **Extended Text** field. This ensures that the home page of the News module shows as many news items as possible, and if someone is interested in a particular item, they can click on the **Read more...** link to read the rest of the item.
- **Select file to upload:** This option allows one to attach a file with the news item.
- **Options:** These allow the poster to automatically approve the news item (meaning it does not need to wait for the administrator to approve it). One can also set a future date and time at which this news item will be shown or posted at the site; this is handy if you are working on an upcoming news article and are not ready to show it to anyone yet. One can also set a date and time for expiration of the news item, which means that the news item will be automatically hidden as soon as the date and time of expiration passes. **Notify by mail when published** alerts the site administrator when a news item is posted; this is especially useful when items have been posted for publishing in the future, and alerts the site administrator in case that news item is no longer needed.

Setting View Permissions

Before anyone can see a news item or rather any news item posted in a new topic, you must set the view permissions for the topic. In fact, there are three types of permissions for news topics, which can be set using **System Admin | Modules | News | Permissions**, and which can be assigned to **Anonymous Users**, **Registered Users**, and **Webmasters**. For our site, we will:

- Set **Approve Permissions** to **Webmasters** for all topics. This will allow only users that have full administrative access to the website to approve new news items. Approval means that a news item that was submitted will be shown on the site in the appropriate topic. Approval can also be set to **Registered Users**, which means that any registered user can submit a news item and have it immediately shown up on the site. This would almost be a necessity for a very busy site.

- Set **Submit Permissions** to **Registered Users** and **Webmasters** for all topics. This will allow only registered users and Webmasters to submit news items. Submit permission allows users to add news items to the News module page. The news items would then have to be approved by the Webmasters before they can be seen on the website. The approve permission can also be assigned to registered users, and even anonymous (non-registered) visitors to the site. Anonymous approval is not recommended to avoid spam messages from advertisers where one cannot figure out who did the posting.
- Set **View Permissions** to **Anonymous Users**, **Registered Users**, and **Webmasters**. This will allow everyone to view news items on our website. If you have posted a news item that is not visible on your site, then the most likely reason is that the view permissions for the topic have not yet been set. The following screenshot illustrates this:

The screenshot shows the 'News Module Admin' interface. At the top, there are links for 'Module Settings', 'Go to module', and 'Help'. Below these are several tabs: 'Topics Manager', 'Post/Edit News', 'Permissions' (which is selected), 'Prune news', 'News Export', 'Newsletter', and 'Statistics'. The main content area is titled 'View Permissions' and includes a 'Submit Query' button. Below the title, it says 'Select, who can view which topics'. There is a table with three rows: 'Anonymous Users', 'Registered Users', and 'Webmasters'. Each row has two columns of checkboxes for 'Digital Entertainment & Audio' and 'Software', and a third column with the text 'All' and an unchecked checkbox. At the bottom of the table are 'Submit' and 'Cancel' buttons.

User Type	Digital Entertainment & Audio	Software	All
Anonymous Users	☒	☒	☐
Registered Users	☒	☒	☐
Webmasters	☒	☒	☐

With the permissions that you have now set, any visitor to your site can view all topics and news items. Anyone except anonymous users can submit a news item and only Webmasters can approve (or accept) news items that have been submitted so that they are viewable by everyone on your site. These permissions, of course, depend on the purpose of your site and can be changed easily to fit your needs.

Removing Old News Items

As our website grows, we will find that older news items will become less relevant, and we will want to remove them over time. This can be done using **System Admin | Modules | News | Prune News**. This will allow us to prune (or remove) news items before a certain date and from specific topics. This should be done on a routine basis perhaps every few months for a very busy website. If any of the news items need to be saved for archival purposes, then this can be done by first exporting the news items, using **System Admin | Modules | News | Export News**, before performing the prune.

Besides, as our website grows over time, we may want to see the number of viewers, number of news articles posted, and ratings assigned by viewers to news postings. This can be accomplished using **System Admin | Modules | News | Statistics**. The following screenshot shows some of the statistics that are produced:

Statistics

Topics statistics					
Topic	Articles	Views	Attached file(s)	Expired Articles	Unique Authors
Digital Entertainment & Audio	1	4	0	0	1
Software	1	1	0	0	1
Totals	2	5	0	0	

Articles statistics			
Most read articles			
Topic	Title	Poster	Views
Digital Entertainment & Audio	Podcast Directories	Steve	4
Software	Juice - a Podcast Aggregator: It's Good for You!	Steve	1

Less read articles			
Topic	Title	Poster	Views
Software	Juice - a Podcast Aggregator: It's Good for You!	Steve	1
Digital Entertainment & Audio	Podcast Directories	Steve	4

Date and Time

These modules allow you to display date and time-related information. We will install the following module as an example:

- Name: extCal
- Version: 2.0.13.1
- URL: <http://www.xoops.org/modules/repository/>
- Description: Calendar and events module for XOOPS that allows you to display a calendar on your website and add events into that calendar.

After installing this module, we will rename it to **Calendar** using **System Admin | Modules**. This will display a link called **Calendar** under the main menu. When someone clicks on this link, it will display a calendar with any event listed or highlighted on that calendar.

Similar to the News module, the Calendar module requires that you first create categories and then post new events into those categories. These events will have a start and end date and time. Older events can be pruned (or removed) using **System Admin | Modules | Calendar | Pruning**.

We will create a category called **Public Holidays** as follows using **System Admin | Modules | Calendar | Category**:

Add category

Add category

Name * Public Holidays

Description

SIZE FONT COLOR

B I U Add

Holidays in Canada.

[more...]

Color: #000000

Send

* = Required

When new Calendar events are added by a user, they will be entered into a particular category such as this one. In order for anyone to see these new events, permissions must be granted to view these categories or visitors will not see them. Similar to the News module, there are three kinds of permissions: view, submit, and auto approve. And, there are again three types of users: anonymous users, registered users, and Webmasters.

After the category is added, we need to first grant permissions to allow events to be added into this category, and then we will add some events:

- Navigate to **System Admin | Modules | Calendar | Permissions**. We will set **View Permissions** to everyone, i.e. **Anonymous Users, Registered Users, and Webmasters**. We will set **Submit Permissions** to **Registered Users, and Webmasters**, and **Auto Approve Permissions** (so that new entries are added into the calendar without having to be checked by anyone) to **Webmasters**.
- Navigate to **Modules | Calendar | Event**, and add an event for each public holiday into the **Public Holidays** category. For example, we will add Good Friday and Easter Monday as events into our Calendar. We will set the **start date** and **end date** to be the same for each holiday and set the start time to be 9:00 am and the end time to be 9:30 am.

Once in a while, we will navigate to **Modules | Calendar | Pruning**, and remove older events. This process permanently removes events from the calendar prior to a specified date, so care should be taken if you need to retain older events.

To see what the calendar looks like with the public holiday events added for July, 2007, click on the **Calendar** link under **Main Menu**. You will find the following screenshot:



	<< June 2007		July 2007			August 2007 >>	
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
26							1
27	2	3 Canada Day Holiday	4	5	6	7	8
28	9	10	11	12	13	14	15

In addition to this, we can also show a miniature version of this calendar in a side block as follows:

- Navigate to **System Admin | Blocks**.
- Scroll down the page until you see **Minical** and click on **Edit** right next to it. Then on the next screen, set the following values:
 - **Block Type: Side Block – Left**
 - **Visible: Yes**
 - **Visible in: Top Page**
 - **Display Images in Minical: Yes**
 - **Display Images from this Category:** If you created images using **System Admin | Images**, then select a category of images you wish to use to display above the mini calendar. Note that the size of these images must be less than 120 pixels x 120 pixels.
 - **Display Month: Current**
 - **Cat to Use: All Cat**
- To set who can view this mini calendar, navigate to **System Admin | Groups**, then click on **Modify** next to **Anonymous Users** and check on **Minical** next to **Block Access Rights**. This allows everyone to view this mini calendar. Note that if visibility is set to **Registered Users**, then only registered users and those with a higher level of permission would be able to view the calendar, such as Webmasters. Thus, the rule is hierarchical in nature with anonymous being at the bottom (with the lowest permission level) and Webmasters being at the top (with the highest permission level).

As a final touch, we will order the side blocks by updating the **Weight** field as follows using **System Admin | Blocks**:

- **Minical:** Set **Weight** to 0.
- **Main Menu:** Set **Weight** to 1.
- **User Menu:** Set **Weight** to 2.
- **Login:** Set **Weight** to 3.

Note that you may have to play with the timezone settings to display the correct day of the month, if your web-host provider is in a different timezone than your city. You can do this by navigating to **System Admin | Preferences | General Settings**. Our website at xoopsbook.steveatwal.com now looks as follows:

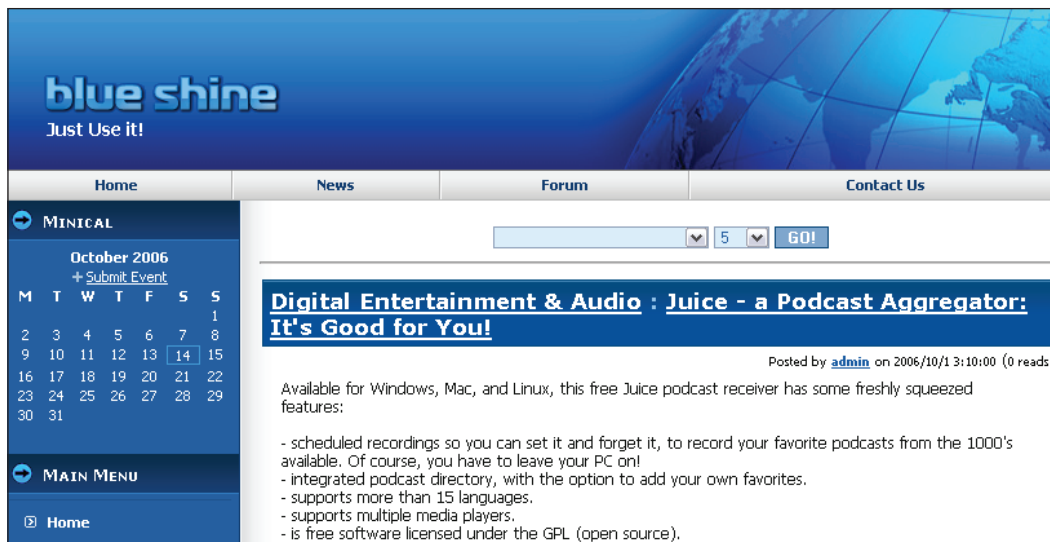


Image Galleries

These modules allow you to display images in an organized way on your website. We will install the following module as an example:

- Name: myAlbum-P
- Version: 2.90 Beta (2.87)
- URL: <http://www.peak.ne.jp/xoops/modules/mydownloads/>
- Description: This is a photo album module that integrates well with XOOPS. The developer slogan for this software is "*easy to use for even the beginners*".

We will install this module on our `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com` website and allow everyone to view the photos and rename the module to **Albums** using **System Admin | Modules**. We will go through the steps needed to set up a category of photos, add a few photos, and then display this album on our demo website.

The first step is to create a category using **System Admin | Modules | Albums | Add/Edit Categories**. Navigate to this page and click on the link to add a new category, and enter **Family Trip** as the **Name**. If we have lots of categories, we can create a hierarchy of them using the **Parent** field, which lets you set the parent category under which this particular category should appear. In our case, this will be a top-level category and we will not set a parent for it. The following screenshot illustrates this:

Categories Manager (Albums)	
Creating a category	
Name *	Family Trip
URL of Banner	http://
Parent	----
Submit Cancel	
* = Required	

Next, click on the + icon under the **images** column next to this new category name. This will allow you to add photos. Images cannot be larger than 1024 pixels x 1024 pixels. This will take you to a new screen that will allow you to add an image from your computer into your new photo album. Select **Category** of **Family Trip**, click the **Browse** button to select an image from your computer, select **No turn** for image rotation (a useful feature in case your images need to be rotated before being shown on your website), and click **Submit** (the **Preview** button allows you to see what your image will look like before it is uploaded on your website). The following screenshot illustrates this:

Photo Upload	
Max pixel size	1024 x 1024
Max file size(byte)	100000
Title	
Description	      SIZE v FONT v COLOR v B I U  Add         [more...]
Category *	Family Trip v
Select photo	Browse...
Image rotation	☒ no turn ☐  ☐  ☐ 
Preview Submit Cancel	

After adding a category and a few photos, your demo website will have a link under **Main Menu** called **Albums**. To see these photos, one last step is left; set permissions under **System Admin | Modules | Albums | Global Permissions**. For anyone to see the categories and photos in them, we will ensure that the **View Rate** option is turned on for **Anonymous Users**, **Registered Users**, and **Webmasters**. In addition, we will turn on the **Vote** and **Tell a Friend** options for everyone, and the **Post** option for **Registered Users** and **Webmasters**. These options allow visitors to rate and vote on the quality of the photos. Note that, by default, the Webmasters group has full access to all options. This is shown in the following screenshot:

Albums

Global Permissions

Configure group's privileges for this module

Webmasters	☒ Post (need approval)	☒ Super Post	☒ Super Edit	☒ Super Delete
	☒ View Rate	☒ Vote	☒ Tell a friend	
Registered Users	☒ Post (need approval)	☐ Super Post	☐ Super Edit	☐ Super Delete
	☒ View Rate	☒ Vote	☒ Tell a friend	
Anonymous Users	☐ Post (need approval)	☐ Super Post	☐ Super Edit	☐ Super Delete
	☒ View Rate	☒ Vote	☒ Tell a friend	
None All				
Cancel Submit				

Now, if you click on the **Album** link under **Main Menu**, you will see the photos you added as can be seen in the following screenshot:



We will not discuss the other options for myAlbum-P in detail, as they are fairly self-explanatory. However, the following is a brief overview of additional functionality and options provided by myAlbum-P:

- **Photo Management** allows you to remove photos previously added into photo albums, or change their properties such as category, submitter, date and time added.

- **Submitted Photos** allows you to accept or remove photos submitted by anyone other than Webmasters (if those people have been granted permission to submit photos).
- **Check Configuration & Environment** shows the status of the myAlbum-P installation. Any status check displayed in anything other than in green indicates a problem, and should be checked with your web-host provider.
- **Batch Register** allows you to add photos that already exist on your web server into your photo album(s).
- **Rebuild Thumbnails** allows thumbnails to be created again, just in case you need to.
- **Import Images** allows you to import images already created using the XOOPS image manager under **System Admin | Images**.
- **Export Images** allows you to export images from myAlbum-P into the XOOPS image manager found under **System Admin | Images**.
- **Global Permissions** allows you to set permissions for access to photo albums for anonymous users, registered users, and Webmasters.
- **Blocks & Groups Admin** allows you to add special blocks on your website such as a **Random Photo** block.
- **Preferences** is listed as a link when you are on any of the preceding pages, and allows you to set general options such as location of photos on your web server.

Entertainment

Games and other fun modules can be added to your website to provide a little entertainment. We will install the following popular game module as an example:

- Name: Frozen Bubble
- Version: 1.3
- URL: <http://www.xoops.org/modules/repository/viewcat.php?cid=105>
- Description: Based on the Linux game by Guillaume Cottenceau, this is a simple but addictive game. More information on the original Linux game can be found at <http://www.frozen-bubble.org>.

Again, we will install this module on our `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com` website and allow anyone to access it. Note, however, that the module only allows registered users, who have logged in, to save their scores.

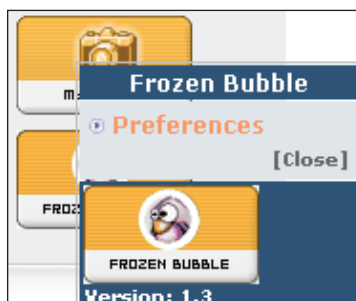
To play the game, simply click on the **Frozen Bubble** link under **Main Menu**. This will display the following screen:



A few things to note before diving into this game:

- Visit www.java.com and install the latest Java software for your web browser. This will ensure that the game loads and works properly in your web browser, since it is a Java-based game.
- To start the game, click on the **Frozen Bubble** logo and then press the up arrow key on your keyboard. The up arrow key is the **Fire** key.
- The object of the game is to pop all the bubbles before you can proceed to the next level. To pop the bubbles, you must join three bubbles of the same color. Other than that, use the left and right-arrow keys to line up your shot and the up arrow key to fire. Very simple, but also very addictive once you start playing.

The options for this module are listed under **System Admin | Frozen Bubble | Preferences** (pop-up menu). The following screenshot illustrates this:



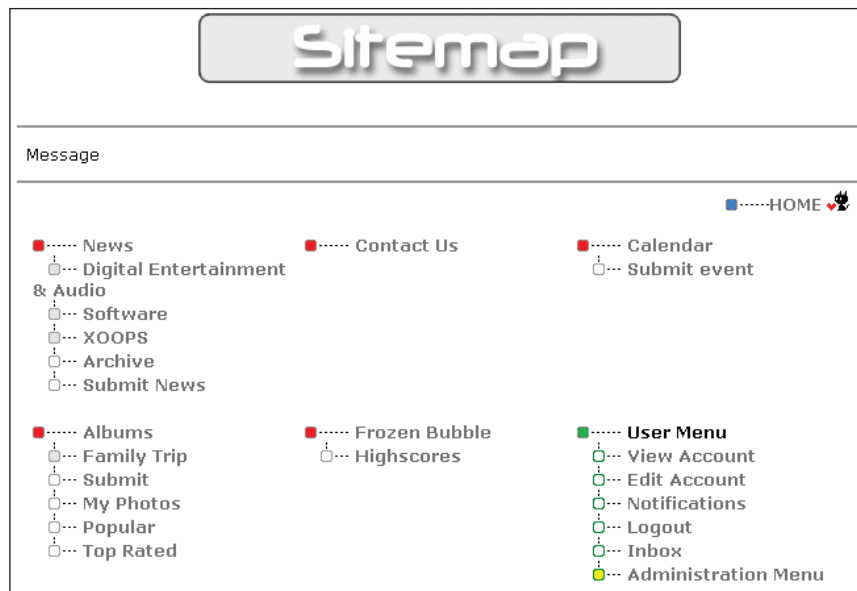
There are only two options: **Store Scores Offline** (leave at the default **No** or your scores will not be saved), and **Repeat Player's Name in Highscores** (leave at the default **Yes** to get details of who reached a certain level in the game). The results of the scores can be displayed from the **Main Menu** by first clicking on the **Frozen Bubble** link and then the **Highscores** link under the **Frozen Bubble** menu.

Navigation

Modules in this category allow you to provide easier navigation of your website, such as customized menus and sitemaps. We will install the following module as an example:

- Name: Sitemap
- Version: 1.13
- URL: <http://www.xoops.org/modules/repository/viewcat.php?cid=62>
- Description: This module will list the pages on our website, organized in hierarchical fashion. This will help visitors, and search engine robots, to find pages on the site. A sitemap provides a link to all important pages on a site, and those pages can be reached using only two links from the home page: using the link to the sitemap, and using a link from the sitemap page to the target page.

The process to install modules should be very familiar by now, and we will install this module on our xoopsbook.steveatwal.com website as we have done earlier. Installation will add a menu item called **Sitemap** under **Main Menu**. When you click on this menu item, it will display links to content created by all installed modules, such as shown in the following screenshot:



Since this module automatically generates a sitemap, you don't need to do anything special to use it. However, you may want to take a look at the options available under **System Admin | Modules | Sitemap | Preferences**. The screen at **System Admin | Groups** can be used to set the groups that have **Module Access Rights**, which will determine who will be allowed to view the sitemap generated by this module. Normal practice is to allow **Module Access Rights** for all visitors and **System Admin Rights** to only Webmasters. On the page for **Sitemap | Preferences**, we will display an introductory **Message** such as **This is a map of our website, so that content can be found more easily. Please click on a link below to view more detailed information.**

Community

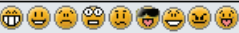
There are modules listed in both the **Community** and **Communication** categories that allow you to build a community of users that can interact with each other online. One such module, which is actually listed under **Communication**, is the newBB module. We will install this module as an example explaining how it can be used to build a community that communicates online:

- Name: newBB
- Version: 2.0.2
- URL: <http://www.xoops.org/modules/repository/viewcat.php?cid=20>
- Description: This module will allow you to create online discussion forums.

We will install this module on our `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com` website with access given to all visitors and administration limited to Webmasters. Once this module is installed in the same manner as outlined earlier and renamed to **Forums**, then under **System Admin | Modules | Forums** there are three main options that you will use: Categories, Forums, and Permissions.

Click on **System Admin | Modules | Forums | Categories** to create a new high-level category into which forums (that contain messages posted by users) will be listed. Example categories that we will create will be **Best Open-Source Software** and **Popular Modules for XOOPS**, as shown in the following screenshot:

Create a New Category

Create a New Category	
Global Access Level:	☒ Webmasters ☒ Registered Users ☒ Anonymous Users
Set Category Position:	0
Category:	Best Open Source Software
Category Description:	      SIZE FONT COLOR B I U ± Add  [more...]
Show Description?	☒ Yes ☐ No
Status:	Active
Sponsor Image:	blank.gif
Sponsor Link:	http://www.xoops.org
	Submit

Note that the **Global Access Level** option in the preceding screenshot determines who can view this category on our website. Forums contain the actual messages posted by users. For example, some forums under **Best Open Source Software**

might be **Multimedia**, **CD/DVD Tools**, and **Desktop Enhancements**. When someone posts a message, it will be posted into one of these forums. Navigate to **System Admin | Modules | Forums** and then click on the **Forums** tab. Create a few forums within the categories created previously by clicking on the **+ Forum** symbol under the **Add** column next to the category name. We will create forums named **Multimedia**, **CD/DVD Tools**, and **Desktop Enhancements** under the category **Best Open Source Software**. We will create forums named **Community**, **Entertainment**, and **Information** under the category **Popular Modules for XOOPS**.

When you create a new forum, there are options listed at the bottom of the page to set permissions on who can view, edit, reply, and post items into the new forum. The permissions you set will depend on your needs. The following screenshot illustrates this:

	Topic permissions for this Forum
Can View	☒ Webmasters ☒ Registered Users ☒ Anonymous Users
Can start new topics	☒ Webmasters ☒ Registered Users ☐ Anonymous Users
Can Reply	☒ Webmasters ☒ Registered Users ☐ Anonymous Users
Can Edit	☒ Webmasters ☒ Registered Users ☐ Anonymous Users
Can Delete	☒ Webmasters ☐ Registered Users ☐ Anonymous Users
Can Add Poll	☒ Webmasters ☒ Registered Users ☐ Anonymous Users
Can Vote	☒ Webmasters ☒ Registered Users ☐ Anonymous Users
Can Attach	☒ Webmasters ☒ Registered Users ☐ Anonymous Users
Can Post without Approval	☒ Webmasters ☒ Registered Users ☐ Anonymous Users
	None All
	Create Forum Clear Cancel

Now, when the **Forums** link is clicked from the main page of your demo website at `xoopsbook.steveatwal.com`, users will see the following:

Total Topics: 0 | Total Posts: 0
Main Options

Best Open Source Software
Discussion forum for your favorite Open Source software.

Forum	Topics	Posts	Last Post
Multimedia Discuss your favorite multimedia software here.	0	0	
CD/DVD Tools Discuss your favorite CD/DVD software here.	0	0	
Desktop Enhancements	0	0	

Popular Modules for XOOPS
Discussion forum for popular modules for XOOPS.

Forum	Topics	Posts	Last Post
Community Discuss your favorite modules related to building a community online with XOOPS.	0	0	
Entertainment Discuss your favorite modules related to games and entertainment online with XOOPS.	0	0	
Information Discuss your favorite modules related to information creation and management online with XOOPS.	0	0	

= New posts
 = No new posts
 = Inactive forum with new posts
 = Inactive forum without new posts

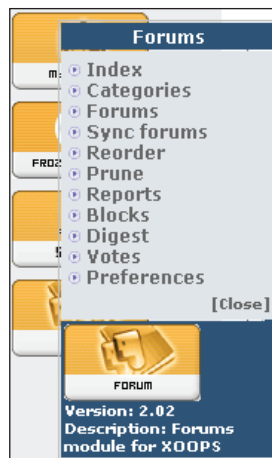
Search

[Advanced Search]

RSS

All registered users will be allowed to post into these forums and all visitors, including those who do not log into our website, will be able to view the posted messages.

Additional preferences can be turned on or off using **System Admin | Modules | Forums | Preferences** (pop-up menu) such as **Enable Rating** (turned on by default). The following screenshot shows how to reach the **Preferences** screen:



Other options that you might be interested in include the following, which can be reached by navigating to **System Admin | Modules | Forums**:

- Reorder to change the order in which the forums are displayed
- Prune to remove older messages in forums
- Votes to view the votes given by registered users to particular messages

To post a message into a particular forum, simply log into the website with a valid user ID and password (that can be created by navigating to <http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com/register.php>), select the forum you wish to post into, and click on the **New Topic** icon as shown in the following screenshot:



Simple to set up and simple to use, the newBB module can be a very useful tool to generate traffic to your website.

E-commerce

E-commerce modules allow you to do online business by allowing you to create a store, collect money, and process orders. We will install the following module as an example:

- Name: Kshop
- Version: 2.03
- URL: <http://www.kaotik.biz>
- Description: This module will allow you to add a store to your website. Kshop is an e-commerce module based on Freznoshop, a small but highly customizable shop.

We will set the following preferences using **System Admin | Modules | Preferences** (pop-up menu):

- **Debug** set to **No**. This is used to provide extra information about kshop in case of operational problems with the software.
- **Kshop Name** set to the name of your website or a meaningful name of your shop, e.g. "Fresh Grocery".
- **Email for Orders, Email for Contact** set to a valid email address for your website.
- **Currency** set to the name of the currency in your country, e.g. **CDN** for Canada.

Before you can start selling products on your website, you will need to create categories and also add products into those categories using **System Admin | Modules | Kshop | Categories** and **System Admin | Modules | Kshop | Products**, respectively. Products that are on sale can also be given a **Special Price** for a new product, and they will show as being on a special sale price on the website. Note that before anyone can see this new module, you will have to set **Module Access Rights** using **System Admin | Groups** for both **Anonymous Users** and **Registered Users**. The following screenshot shows the module in action after a search for **apples**:

**Fresh
Grocery**

Shopping
Cart

Products: 0

Total: CDN
0.00

Search:

Terms

Privacy

Returns

Company
Info

Cart

Checkout

Your search for apples: 1 Product found.

No categories were found.

Products found:



Apples .: A01

Apples are a great source of vitamins. As the old saying goes: an apple a day keeps the doctor away!

[More Info](#)

Add:



To
Shopping
Cart

Please note that when taking orders online, you must add an SSL certificate or enable an SSL certificate for your hosted website. An SSL certificate allows your website to encrypt data before it is transmitted from the user to your web server.

Summary

As you can see from the modules that we have covered, there is a wide variety of additional functionality that can be easily added to your site. This is one of the key benefits of XOOPS. There are many other modules available at www.xoops.org, if you do not find what you need here. Modules are available for gathering visitor statistics and adding a help-desk function, as well as smaller modules such as those for displaying the weather. There are also software engineers available, for a price, to custom-build modules that meet your particular requirements. Some of these software engineers can be found at:

- www.getafreelancer.com
- www.rentacoder.com

7

Case Study: An Intranet Portal

To build a website that has some useful functionality for your corporate employees, you need to add the right modules for your needs. The IntranetPack is a free package that contains some modules commonly used to build a company portal. Depending on your needs, you may wish to install some or all of these modules.

We will look at how you can use this package to create your own company portal. We will look at:

- Using the IntranetPack
- Other module packages
- Using a company LDAP server for authentication

As before, we will install the modules and show how they work on our demo website at <http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com>.

Using the IntranetPack

The IntranetPack can be downloaded from the XOOPS website at www.xoops.org/modules/core/singlefile.php?cid=9&lid=100 and it contains the following modules:

- **News 1.4** for display of articles and news by date
- **CBB 2.2** for discussion forums
- **DokuWiki 1.0** for an internal documentation Wiki
- **MultiMenu 1.7** for creating customized menu structures
- **piCal 0.51** for showing a calendar with events
- **WF-Downloads 2.05a** for creating a section for downloading files
- **XoopsPoll 1.0** for creating polls through which users can cast their vote

- **SmartFAQ 1.04** for showing frequently asked questions
- **SmartSection 1.0** for creating categories and subcategories for managing news, and so on

The first thing to do will be to decide the modules that you want to use based on the functionality they provide for your corporate employees. For our fictional corporate entity, we will use all of the modules in the IntranetPack except for SmartFAQ and SmartSection, the functionality of which we should be able to replace using the DokuWiki. We have already discussed the News module in Chapters 4 and 6, so we will not go over it here. It is the main module being used at <http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com>. All the other modules will also be installed at <http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com>.

Configuring the CBB Module

The CBB module will allow you to add an integrated discussion forum to your intranet. You can allow users who have registered on your XOOPS website to read and post messages in any of the forums you create with CBB.

Some of the features of this module include:

- Creating an unlimited number of forum categories
- Creating an unlimited number of discussion forums within each forum category
- Allowing users to subscribe to RSS feeds generated by each forum; RSS feeds allow your users to see information posted in the categories without the need to visit your website
- A WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor that allows your users to post entries into forums; in other words, your users do not need to have any prior HTML or programming knowledge
- Setting user permissions for each forum, so that users can either be allowed to view entries only, or view and reply to posts, or can also be allowed to create their own new discussion topics

We have already installed this module in Chapter 6, so we shall not go over how to do this again (in fact, you do not need to install this module if it is already installed). Here we will show how to create and activate two categories called **Best Open-Source Software** and **Popular Modules for XOOPS**. To accomplish this, log into the XOOPS administrative interface for your website and then navigate to **System Admin | Modules | Forums | Categories** and click on **Create a New Category**. The result is shown in the following screenshot:

Module Settings | Go to module | Help | About Forums Module Admin: Categories

[Index](#) [Categories](#) [Forums](#) [Sync forums](#) [Reorder](#) [Prune](#) [Reports](#)
[Blocks](#) [Digest](#) [Votes](#)

Categories

[Create a New Category](#)

Category	Status:	Edit	Delete
Best Open Source Software	Active		
Popular Modules for XOOPS	Active		

We will also create a few discussion forums within these categories. Messages that users post are put into forums rather than into categories; so before anyone can post a message, the forums will have to be created by navigating to **System Admin | Modules | Forums | Forums** and then clicking on the **+ forum** button under the **Add** column next to a category. The following screenshot shows the forums that have been created:

Module Settings | Go to module | Help | About Forums Module Admin: Forums

[Index](#) [Categories](#) [Forums](#) [Sync forums](#) [Reorder](#) [Prune](#) [Reports](#)
[Blocks](#) [Digest](#) [Votes](#)

Forums

Name	Edit	Delete	Add	Move
Best Open Source Software			+ forum	
Multimedia			+subforum	
CD/DVD Tools			+subforum	
Desktop Enhancements			+subforum	
Popular Modules for XOOPS			+ forum	
Community			+subforum	
Entertainment			+subforum	
Information			+subforum	

You can also create subforums, i.e. forums listed within forums in a hierarchical fashion, using the **+ subforum** button next to each forum. The arrow next to each forum, under the **Move** column, is used to move a particular forum to a different category or move the forum so that it becomes a subforum of another forum. The following screenshot illustrates this:

The screenshot shows the 'Forums Module Admin' interface. At the top, there are navigation links: 'Module Settings | Go to module | Help | About' and 'Forums Module Admin:'. Below these are several buttons: 'Index', 'Categories', 'Forums', 'Sync forums', 'Reorder', 'Prune', 'Reports', 'Blocks', 'Digest', and 'Votes'. The main content area features a 'Move this Forum' dialog box. This dialog has two input fields: 'Move to category:' and 'Make a sub forum of:'. Both fields have a dropdown menu with '< Select >' as the current selection. The dropdown for 'Make a sub forum of:' is open, showing two options: 'Best Open Source Software' and 'Popular Modules for XOOPS'.

Unless you correctly set the permissions for each forum after it is created, none of these forums will be useable, nor can anyone post any discussion message or start a message thread. This has already been shown in earlier chapters, so we will not go through the steps again in detail on how to assign permissions. Note that Webmasters can create more categories and different permissions can be assigned to different groups.

For our categories, we will edit each category and set the following permissions:

- **Category access:** Allow all users (anonymous users, registered users, and Webmasters) to view all categories created. These "Global Access Level" permissions can be seen when you create or edit a category.



Anonymous users are those who are not known to our intranet. Registered users are users that have an account on our intranet and have logged in. Webmasters are users that have administrative access to our intranet.

For our forums, we will edit each forum and set the following permissions:

- **Global access level:** Allow all users (anonymous users, registered users, and Webmasters) to view all forum names created.
- **Can view:** Allow all users (anonymous users, registered users, and Webmasters) to view all forum messages created by users.

- **Can start new topics:** Allow only registered users and Webmasters to create a new message topic in all forums. Allowing anonymous users to do this is inviting trouble, since your XOOPS website has not collected any information (such as name and email address) from these users; hence, it is extremely difficult to track who may have created an offending new topic.
- **Can reply:** Allow only registered users and Webmasters to reply to discussion messages posted in your forums. Allowing anonymous users to do this is inviting trouble, as mentioned previously.
- **Can edit/Can delete:** Allow only Webmasters to edit and delete posted messages in your forums.
- **Can add poll:** Depending on your needs, you may allow registered users as well as Webmasters to create polls.
- **Can vote:** Allow only registered users and Webmasters to respond to polls in your forums. Allowing anonymous users to do this may invalidate your responses.
- **Can attach:** Allow only registered users and Webmasters to attach files to any messages they post in your forums.
- **Can post without approval:** Allow only registered users and Webmasters to post messages, without those messages being first approved by Webmasters.

The following screenshot shows the CBB module in action:

Total Topics: 1 | Total Posts: 1

Main Options

Best Open Source Software

Forum	Topics	Posts	Last Post
 Multimedia Discuss your favorite multimedia software here.	0	0	
 CD/DVD Tools Discuss your favorite CD/DVD software here.	1	1	2006/10/10 20:17:03  by admin
 Desktop Enhancements	0	0	

Popular Modules for XOOPS

Forum	Topics	Posts	Last Post
 Community Discuss your favorite modules related to building a community online with XOOPS.	0	0	
 Entertainment Discuss your favorite modules related to games and entertainment online with XOOPS.	0	0	
 Information	0	0	

 = New posts
 = No new posts
 = Inactive forum with new posts
 = Inactive forum without new posts

Search

[Advanced Search]

Configuring the DokuWiki Module

The DokuWiki module will allow users to contribute to a manual-type document by creating, editing, and linking pages similar to <http://wikipedia.org>. This allows many people to collaborate on the same information, so that anybody can add or edit information. The information you wish to create may be company policies, employee handbooks, technical information, as well as anything else you can think of. Wikis are becoming increasingly popular.

Some of the features of this module include:

- You can create as many new, unlimited-length pages as you wish.
- Users edit all the pages themselves, so that the DokuWiki module is not maintained by one person.

- You can assign permissions to your users, or groups of users, to allow them to read, edit, create, upload, and delete content in your DokuWiki.

To install this module, follow the same procedures as before, i.e. upload the folder **DokuWiki** from the uncompressed **IntranetPack** folder, to the `/public_html/xoopsbook/modules/` folder on your website.

After uploading the module, we will install this module using the XOOPS administration menu **Modules Administration**. We will then use **System Admin | Groups** to ensure that the following permissions are set for DokuWiki:

- **Webmasters: Module Admin Rights** and **Module Access Rights** (should be set by default)
- **Registered Users: Module Access Rights**

A few files have to be first created before the DokuWiki can be used. We can do this by navigating to **Modules Administration | DokuWiki | Index** (pop-up menu) and then clicking on the **Create** link next to each index file. The folders and files created by this method are:

- `/home/steveatw/public_html/xoopsbook/uploads/dokuwiki/`
- `/home/steveatw/public_html/xoopsbook/uploads/dokuwiki/pages/`
- `/home/steveatw/public_html/xoopsbook/uploads/dokuwiki/attic/`
- `/home/steveatw/public_html/xoopsbook/uploads/dokuwiki/changes.log`

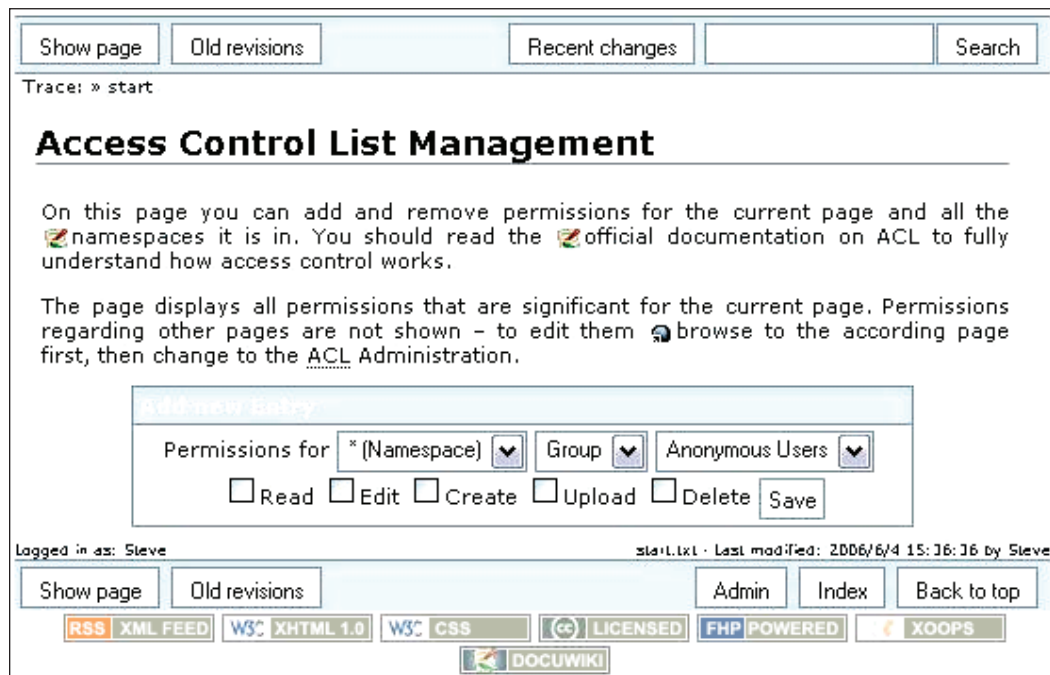
Next, we set the permissions for who can read, edit, create, upload, and delete content in the new Wiki. Allowing anonymous users to read the Wiki will depend on your company policy. For our purposes, we navigate to **System Admin | Modules | DokuWiki | Permissions** and set the following permissions:

- **Anonymous Users:** No access
- **Registered Users:** All Access, i.e. read, edit, create, upload, and delete content
- **Webmasters:** All Access, i.e. read, edit, create, upload, and delete content

When we navigate to our intranet at `http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com`, we will see a link under the main menu for **DokuWiki**. We click on this link and see that, initially, there will be nothing on our new Wiki, as shown in the following screenshot, so we will need to click on the **Create this page** button to create our first entry. When we create a new page, you simply need to enter the text for that page and a new entry will appear on the main page of DokuWiki. Each Wiki software system, including DokuWiki, has certain syntax for entering information. You need to know the syntax for DokuWiki to make full use of it. To find out more about this syntax, navigate to `http://wiki.splitbrain.org/wiki:syntax`.



After entries have been created, Webmasters can change permissions on those entries by clicking on the **Admin** button and then the **Access Control List Management** link. The following screenshot explains this:



In the preceding screenshot, namespaces are basically like containers that contain the pages created within the DokuWiki. When all pages within a namespace are removed, the namespace ceases to exist. Permissions can be set on namespaces or on individual pages of the DokuWiki. You can also select the groups of users to assign the permissions to, so that the right group of users will be able to read, edit, create, upload, or delete the pages in the namespace (or page) selected.

Full documentation for DokuWiki and the syntax needed to create a full-featured Wiki for your corporate needs can be found at <http://wiki.splitbrain.org/wiki:dokuwiki>.

Configuring the MultiMenu Module

The MultiMenu module allows you to build customized menus with links that can be set to point to anywhere on your website or any other website on the Internet. Some of the features of the MultiMenu module include:

- You can use four menu blocks that can be configured independently.
- You can add an unlimited number of links.
- Links can be to anything on the Internet.

The following screenshot shows the default view of MultiMenu inside the administrative panel on our intranet at **System Admin | Modules | MultiMenu | multiMenu 01**:



To change the default names of the menu, navigate to **System Admin | Modules | MultiMenu | Preferences**. We shall display the first three menu groups and name them as follows: **multiMenu 01** will be named **Search Engines**, **multiMenu 02** will be named **Company Wiki**, **multiMenu 03** will be named **Company E-Store**. We have turned off the other menus by setting their display value to **No**. This is shown in the following screenshot:

Menu to display in theme:	None ▼
Insert your theme : <{include file="../../modules/multiMenu/theme/multimenu.php"}> Note: Only 'main links' are displayed in theme !	
Theme menu display model	Table ▼
Menu Title 01	Search Engines
Display in index multiMenu 01	☒ Yes ☐ No
Menu Title 02	Company Wiki
Display in index multiMenu 02	☒ Yes ☐ No
Menu Title 03	Company E-Store
Display in index multiMenu 03	☒ Yes ☐ No
Menu Title 04	multiMenu 04
Display in index multiMenu 04	☐ Yes ☒ No
Menu Title 05	multiMenu 05
Display in index multiMenu 05	☐ Yes ☒ No
Menu Title 06	multiMenu 06
Display in index multiMenu 06	☐ Yes ☒ No
Menu Title 07	multiMenu 07
Display in index multiMenu 07	☐ Yes ☒ No
Menu Title 08	multiMenu 08
Display in index multiMenu 08	☐ Yes ☒ No
Go!	

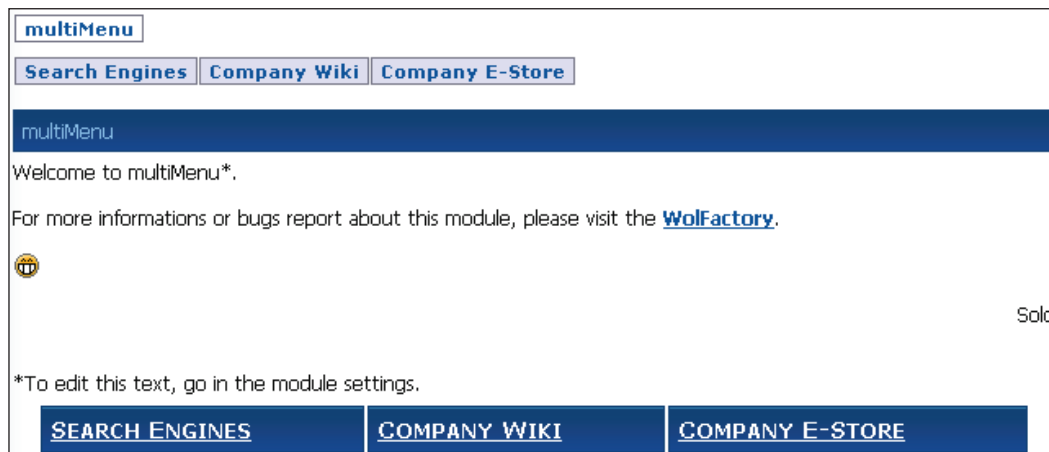
We have set the menu to be displayed in the main page of our website to none. However, we will show the **MultiMenu** with a link in our header by updating the code in our `/public_html/xoopsbook/themes/blue_shine/theme.html` file to include the following two highlighted lines of code that will display a new link between the **Forum** and **Contact Us** links:

```

<td id="headmenu"><a class="menuHead"
href="{ $xoops_url }>/modules/newbb/">Forum</a></td>
<td class="separator"></td>
<td id="headmenu"><a class="menuHead"
href="{ $xoops_url }>/modules/multiMenu/index.php">
Custom Menus</a></td>
<td class="separator"></td>
<td id="headmenu"><a class="menuHead"
href="{ $xoops_url }>/modules/liaise/">Contact Us</a></td>

```

We have created a few custom menu links and they are shown in the following screenshot. Here, we have created two new custom menus, namely **Search Engines** and **Company Wiki**. These custom menus contain two links and one link, respectively, i.e. the **Search Engines** menu has two menu items, one for **Google** and one for **Yahoo**. These menu items were created by navigating to **Modules | DokuWiki | Search Engines** and then clicking on the **New Link** button for each menu. Play with this module to see what you need for your own website.



Configuring the piCal Module

The piCal module allows you to show a calendar on your website and display events for each day of the calendar. Features of this module include the following:

- Allows all day events
- Allows recurring events
- Allows users to submit events
- Allows you to see the calendar with a daily, weekly, or monthly view

Install the module just like any other module. Below is the piCal in action on our demo website, where we have changed the name to be displayed from **piCal** to **Events Calendar**. The default view is a **Monthly View**, which can be changed by going to **System Admin | Modules | Calendar | General Settings of piCal** within the XOOPS administration menu.



To add a new event, all one has to do is click on the pencil icon on a particular date and then enter the information for the event. The following screenshot illustrates this. This assumes that you have set the permissions as to who is allowed to access this module using **System Admin | Groups**. For example, **Webmasters** and **Registered Users** may be allowed to add events, and **Anonymous Users** may only be allowed to view them.

Scheduler -Editing View-	
Summary	Dance Class
Beginning DateTime	2006-10-12 ... 9 : 00 (GMT+00:00)
Finishing DateTime	2006-10-12 ... 17 : 00 (GMT+00:00)
Allday Options	☐ Allday Event ☐ Show as Bar ☐ Anniversary etc.
Location	
Contact	
Description	      SIZE FONT COLOR B <i>I</i> <u>U</u> $\pm$ Add
Class	☒ Public ☐ Private among myself only

You can set a **Summary** (that appears on the calendar), a detailed description, a start date and time, and an end date and time.

Before you can post events into the calendar, you must set the required permissions using the **Modules | Calendar | Group's Permissions** menu. You can assign permissions so that registered users, Webmasters, or even anonymous users can post. The following screenshot shows the **Group's Permissions** screen.

Group's Permissions	
Select permissions that each group is allowed to do If you need this feature, set 'Authorities of users' to Specified in Group's permissions at first. The settings of two groups of Administrator and Guest will be ignored.	
Webmasters	☐ Can add ☐ Super add ☐ Can edit ☐ Super edit ☐ Super del
Registered Users	☐ Can add ☐ Super add ☐ Can edit ☐ Super edit ☐ Super del
Anonymous Users	☐ Can add ☐ Super add ☐ Can edit ☐ Super edit ☐ Super del
None All	
Cancel Submit	

Configuring the WF-Downloads Module

The WF-Downloads module creates an area on your website where your users can download files that you have copied onto your website, or create links to files on other websites. These files can be anything you would like to share with your corporate users. Main features of this module are:

- You can create categories and subcategories of files.
- Users can upload files.
- You can set permissions on categories and files.

We will install this on our demo website so that Webmasters have **Admin Rights**, and everyone else has **Access Rights**, i.e. are able to view the categories and files. Permissions can be set on categories and subcategories to refine who can view and upload files.

Probably the first thing you will want to do is create a few categories for the various types of downloadable files you make available on your intranet. Navigating to **System Admin | Modules | WF-Downloads | Category Management** will allow us to create these categories. In our sample site, we have created **Anti-virus Software** and **Office Productivity Software** as two categories. We then assign permissions using **System Admin | Modules | WF-Downloads | Permissions** so that all users are able to view and download files, except for anonymous users.

Following is a screenshot of the WF-Downloads module in action on our demo website:



Configuring the XoopsPoll Module

The XoopsPoll module allows you to create polls for your users where they can cast their vote on any subject you wish to have feedback on. Some nice features of this module are:

- A simple clean interface using the **System Admin | Modules | Polls | Add Poll** options within the XOOPS administration
- Allows each registered user to vote only once
- An expiration date and time can be set for each poll you create

To create a new poll, navigate to **Modules | Polls**, and then click on **Add Poll** to enter a question as well as some possible answers for users to choose from. The following example illustrates this:

Polls Configuration

Create new poll

Poll Question

What is the best content management system?

Poll description

Let us know what you feel is the best open source content management system.

Expiration

Format: yyyy-mm-dd hh:mm:ss
Current time is 2006-09-05 03:19:38

2007-09-12 13:00:00

Display in block?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Display order

0

Allow multiple selection?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Notify the poll author when expired?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Options

XOOPS

Drupal

Mambo

aqua.gif

blue.gif

brown.gif

darkgreen.gif

gold.gif

green.gif

grey.gif

orange.gif

pink.gif

purple.gif

Submit

Following are some sample polls we have created on our demo site at <http://xoopsbook.steveatwal.com>.

Polls List				
Poll Question	Total voters	Total votes	Expiration	
What is your favorite company logo?	1	1	2007/1/11 20:39	Results
What do you think of the new anti-virus software?	1	1	2006/6/11 20:32	Results
What do you think about XOOPS?	0	0	Expired	Results

Other Module Packages

There are other module packages that people have created in the hopes of providing functionality for a particular cause or type of functionality, which can all be downloaded from the www.xoops.org website. Following are a few of these packages:

- PersonalPack (www.xoops.org/modules/core/singlefile.php?cid=9&lid=101): This pack contains modules that can be used to create a personal website for you to tell family and friends about yourself and what you do.
- CompanyPack (www.xoops.org/modules/core/singlefile.php?cid=9&lid=99): This pack contains modules suitable for creating a company site with information about the company.
- CommunityPack (www.xoops.org/modules/core/singlefile.php?cid=9&lid=98): This pack contains modules suitable for creating a community site with information and options for visitors to participate in discussions and submit content.
- CommercePack (www.xoops.org/modules/core/singlefile.php?cid=9&lid=97): This pack contains modules suitable for creating a commercial site with information and options for visitors to buy products and services from your company.

Using a Company LDAP Server for Authentication

Many organizations, in their never-ending quest to simplify their operations, are centralizing user accounts and passwords with a central directory such as LDAP or Windows Active Directory. XOOPS is able to connect to these directories so that existing user accounts that are already set up in a corporate directory can be used to log into XOOPS. XOOPS will pick up these usernames and groups and allow you to assign permissions to modules based on them. This means that the administration of XOOPS is simplified and you do not need to duplicate usernames and passwords for all your employees within XOOPS. Just imagine having to set up three hundred new user accounts in XOOPS, when those accounts already exist, and then having to maintain those accounts as staff join or leave or require access to different modules and blocks!

To accomplish the mission of tying into your corporate directory for authentication, follow the steps below:

1. Navigate to **System Admin | Preferences | Authentication Options**.
2. Change the **Authentication Method** to **Standard LDAP Directory** (or **Microsoft Active Directory** if connecting to Active Directory).
3. Set the values for the other fields to match your corporate directory values. If you are the IT Administrator for your company, then you should know what these values are. If you are not the IT Administrator, then you will need to talk to him or her and, either ask for the information or ask him or her to set up this section of XOOPS. See the following screenshot:

Preferences Main >>> Authentication Options	
Authentication Options	
Authentication Method Which authentication method would you like to use for signing on users.	Standard LDAP Directory ▾
LDAP - Port Number LDAP - Port Number	389
LDAP - Server Name The name of your LDAP directory server.	your directory server
LDAP - Base DN The base DN (Distinguished Name) of your LDAP directory tree.	dc=xoops,dc=org
DN of the LDAP manager The DN of the user allow to make search (eg manager)	manager_dn
Password of the LDAP manager The password of the user allow to make search	*****
LDAP Version protocol The LDAP Version protocol : 2 or 3	3
Xoops User(s) bypass LDAP Authentication Xoops User(s) allow to bypass the LDAP login. Login directly in XOOPS Separate each loginname with a	admin
Login name use in the DN The XOOPS login name is used in the LDAP DN (eg : uid=,dc=xoops,dc=org) The entry is directly read in the LDAP Server without search	☐ Yes ☒ No

The remaining key values for this section include:

- **LDAP - Port Number:** This is usually **389**.
- **LDAP - Server Name:** The fully qualified domain name of your LDAP directory server, e.g. `ad.mycompany.com`.
- **LDAP - Base DN:** The base DN (Distinguished Name) of your LDAP directory tree. This specifies the organizational unit in your directory server that you wish to use. This will determine the user groups in your LDAP server that are allowed to log into XOOPS.
- **DN of the LDAP manager:** The DN of the user allowed to make an LDAP search (e.g. `manager`).
- **Password of the LDAP manager:** The password of the user allowed to make an LDAP search.
- **LDAP Version protocol:** The LDAP version protocol, 2 or 3. Leave at the default of **3** (latest) unless you have a reason to change this.
- **Xoops User(s) bypass LDAP Authentication:** Normally the admin account can log in without having to be authenticated with an outside directory server. This allows you to log in to administer your site when the outside authentication server is offline. Additional accounts can be specified here.
- **The Domain Name:** This is your active directory domain name. Use it if you selected **Microsoft Active Directory** as the authentication method.
- **LDAP - Mail Field Name:** The name of the **E-Mail** field in your LDAP directory tree.
- **LDAP - Given Name Field Name:** The name of the **Given Name** field in your LDAP directory.
- **LDAP - Surname Field Name:** The name of the **Surname** field in your LDAP directory.

You should create a separate LDAP manager name and password that is given access to search the LDAP directory, which could then be used for the purposes of connecting to your company LDAP server. This will ensure that if this account information is compromised, the password can be changed or the LDAP manager account can be removed without affecting any system other than XOOPS in your organization. Do not use an account that is used for other purposes, e.g. the administrator user ID and password for the LDAP server.

The screenshot opposite shows some of the options that you need to set for LDAP authentication to work.

Summary

When building an intranet, keep in mind that access should only be granted to registered users and Webmasters, and you may want to ensure that only users in a corporate LDAP directory are allowed to log into the intranet, by setting the LDAP options within XOOPS to match the information for your organization. As we have seen, the IntranetPack is a good starting point when adding useful functionality to your intranet. Additional modules can, of course, be added as needed, and in the end, what modules or functionality you use depends on your needs.

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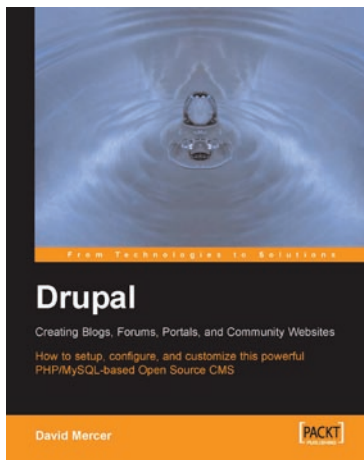
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