Creating and Setting Up the Initial Content

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The following sections outline the steps necessary to create and set up the initial content displayed on the homepage.

Creating a photo album

The system lets you create and maintain a photo album for images and photos that are relevant to the group or course and its activities. For example, a golf group may want to post pictures from its last tournament, or a geography course may want to post pictures of places mentioned in the course of study.

The photo album can contain any number of images and photos up to a default limit of 12 MB. When you upload files, the system will downsize photos and images to an average size of 40 K. If each image were to take the average size (40 K), an album could contain just over 300 images. It is important to note that the 12 MB size limit also includes any photos that have been submitted but not yet posted and those that have been inactivated. If you attempt to submit or post an image to an album that contains no more space you will receive an error message.

Note: The amount of space allocated for storing photos may be different than the default limit. See you system administrator to determine the amount of space available to your institution.

The photo album supports two file formats: graphic interchange format (GIF) and Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPG or JPEG). Once files have been posted, you can give them titles and captions. When members first click into the photo area, they see thumbnails of each image, including the title, when the image was posted and by whom, and the caption. Clicking on the image displays the photo viewer web page, which allows members to see the larger image and to navigate forward or backward through the album.

Steps

Follow these steps to create a photo album.

- 1. Access the group or course home page.
- 2. From the Content Tools menu, locate and click **Manage Photos**. You'll see a Manage Photos page similar to the following:

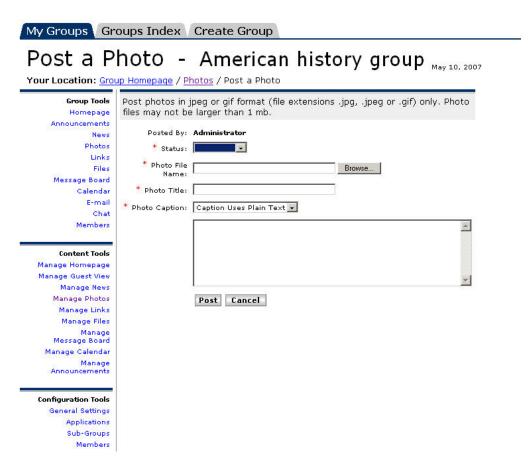


- 3. It contains three sections:
 - **Submitted Photos:** A list of all photos that have been submitted by members, but not yet reviewed and posted.
 - Active Photos: A list of all active (posted) photos.
 - Inactive Photos: A list of all photos that have been deactivated (removed from the homepage), but not yet deleted.

Note: At this point, there should be no content under any of these sections.

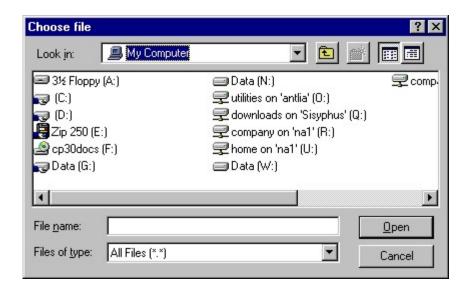
4. Locate and click the "Post a New Photo" link that appears within the Active Photos list.

You see the Post a Photo window.



- 5. From the **Status** field, use the drop-down to select **Active**.
- 6. In the **Photo File Name** field, enter the path to the photo or image or click the Browse button to locate the photo or image on your machine or a network location.

7. If you click **Browse**, you see a dialog box similar to the following that allows you to search for a file.



8. After you have specified or searched for the file, use the **Photo Title** field to enter a title.

Note: This field is required and only supports 60 characters.

9. In the **Photo Caption** field, enter a caption for the photo.

Note: This field is also required. It supports 5000 characters. The caption field also supports basic HTML formatting so that you can change the characteristics of the font (color, size, etc.) or add a link. For example, if you want the caption to be displayed in a red font, you could bracket the text with the following HTML tags:

here is some red text

- 10. When using HTML formatting, the following tags are not typically supported: <applet>, <area>, <base>, <basefont>, <bgsound>, <body>, <button>, <caption>, <div>, <embed>, <fieldset>, <form>, <frame>, <frameset>, <head>, <html>, <iframe>, <input>, <label>, <layer>, <legend>, link>, <map>, <meta> <nobr>, <noframes>, <noscript>, <object>, <optgroup>, <option>, , <script>, <select>, , <style>, <textarea>, <thead>, <title>, and <wbr>.
- 11. These may vary at your institution. Additionally, you may not employ JavaScript. The non-supported tags and JavaScripting will be removed by an application called Tidy. The system also uses Tidy to detect and fix minor errors, to flag an error on an uncorrectable problem, and to close any unclosed tags that might cause problems in certain browsers.

12. To add the photo or image to the album, click **Post**. To exit without adding the photo or image, click **Cancel**.

Note: If you posted the photo, you will see a dialog stating that your photo has been posted. Click **Ok**. You are returned to the Manage Photos window, where you see a thumbnail of the photo you just added listed under the Active Photos section.

13. To add more photos to the album, repeat the steps 5 through 10.

Creating Links

Purpose

The system allows you to create and maintain a list of Internet links that provide resources for the group. For example, a ski club might want to add links to local ski resorts or the local ski report, an engineering course might want to add links to commercial Web sites for companies conducting research in areas the course is studying.

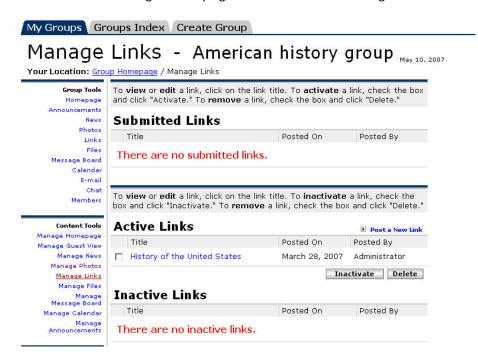
When you add links to the homepage, you must include a title for the link, the URL (Web address), and a link description. The title provides the actual link that members will click to access the URL. The description should provide some indication to users of the contents of the page that they will be accessing. Any number of Internet links can be posted.

Steps

Follow these steps to create an initial set of links for group or course members.

- 1. Access the group or course home page.
- 2. From the Content Tools menu, locate and click **Manage Links**.

3. You see a Manage Links page similar to the following:



It contains three sections:

- **Submitted Links:** A list of all the links that have been submitted by members, but not yet reviewed and posted.
 - Active Links: A list of all active (posted) links.
- Inactive Links: A list of all links that have been deactivated (removed from the homepage), but not yet deleted.
- 4. At this point, there should be no content displayed under any of these sections.
- 5. Locate and click the "Post a New Link" option that appears within the Active Links list.

6. You see the Post a Link window.

Post a Link - American history group May 10, 2007

Your Location: Group Homepage / Links / Post a Link **Group Tools** Posted By: Administrator Homepage * Status: Announcements News * Title: Photos Links * URL: Files * Link Description Uses Plain Text 🔻 Message Board Description: Calendar E-mail Chat Members **Content Tools** Manage Homepage Post Cancel Manage Guest View Manage News

7. In the URL field, enter the complete Internet address of the link. For example, if you were adding a link to CNN.com, you would enter the following: http://www.cnn.com

The **URL** field also supports addresses containing the following protocols:

- https://
- ftp://
- nntp:
- mailto:
- 8. In the **Description** field, enter a one or two sentence description of the page that will open when the users click on the link.

Note: This field is required. It supports 1000 characters. The **Description** field also supports basic HTML formatting so that you can change the characteristics of the font (color, size, etc.), add tables, include images, etc. For example, if you were managing a homepage for a golf club and were adding a link to a local golf course, you could add the course logo by using the tag pointing it to a server were the image was stored.

- 9. To add the link, click **Post**. To exit without adding the link, click **Cancel**.
- 10. If you posted the link, you will see a dialog stating that your link has been posted. Click **Ok**.

Note: You are returned to the Manage Links window, where you see information about the link listed under the Active Links section.

11. To add more links, repeat these steps.

Creating News Articles

Purpose

The system allows you to create and maintain a list of news articles. A news article might be nothing more than an informational announcement, or it might be a treatise on a topic of interest for the group. For example, a movie club might post articles with brief information about upcoming movie festivals or screenings; a literature course might post a book review written by a course member.

When you add articles to the homepage, you must include a title for the article and the actual text that constitutes the article.

Steps

Follow these steps to create an initial set of news articles.

 From the Content Tools menu, locate and click Manage News. You'll see a Manage News Articles page similar to the following:

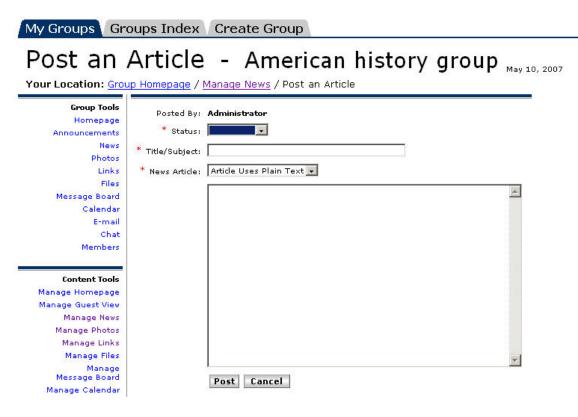


It contains three sections:

- **Submitted Articles:** A list of all articles that have been submitted by members, but not yet reviewed and posted.
 - Active Articles: A list of all active (posted) articles.
- Inactive Articles: A list of all articles that have been deactivated (removed from the homepage), but not yet deleted.

Note: At this point, there should be no content displayed under any of these sections.

- 2. Locate and click the "**Post a New Article**" link that appears within the Active Articles list.
- You see the Post an Article window.



- 4. From the **Status** field, use the drop-down to select <u>Active</u>.
- 5. In the **Title/Subject** field enter a title or subject for the article.

Note: This field is required and supports 60 characters.

6. In the **News Article** field, enter the text of the article.

Note: This field is required. It supports 25,000 characters. The article field also supports basic HTML formatting so that you can change the characteristics of the font (color, size, etc.), add tables, include images, etc. For example, if you wanted the article to contain headings and subheadings, you could use standard <h1>, <h2>, <h3>, etc. tags.

- 7. To add the news article, click **Post**. To exit without adding the article, click **Cancel**.
- 8. If you posted the article, you will see a dialog stating that your article has been posted. Click **OK**. You are returned to the Manage News Articles window, where you see information about the article listed under the Active Articles section.
- 9. To add more articles to the homepage, repeat steps 5 through 9.

Creating Message Board Topics and Descriptions

Purpose

If your group or course has been given access to the message board feature by the administrator, you should create a set of initial message board topics and descriptions that will encourage members to access and use the message board. Members themselves can add topics to the message board. However, as the group or course leader you are the only one who can delete topics and replies, unless you delegate this permission to members of the group.

Steps

Follow these steps to create an initial set of message board topics and associated descriptions.

 From the Content Tools menu, locate and click the Manage Message Boards link.

You see the Message Board Topics window displaying all message board topics available to the group. At this point the window should appear similar to the following as there shouldn't be any topics:



2. To add topics to the message board, click the **Post Topic** icon.

You see the Post a Topic window:



- 3. In the **Title** field, enter the topic.
- 4. Click the **Add Topic** button.

Note: You are returned to the Message Board Topics page. To add additional topics, click the **Post a Topic** icon and repeat the steps outlined above for entering a title. These same message board topics appear on the homepage.

5. To create additional message board topics, repeat steps 2 through 4.

Creating Announcements

Purpose

If your group or course has been given access to the announcements feature by the administrator, you should create an initial announcement that welcomes members to the homepage, as well as any other appropriate announcements for your group or course.

Note: These announcements will also appear in members' Personal Announcements channel in the portal if that channel is placed on one of a user's tabs.

Steps

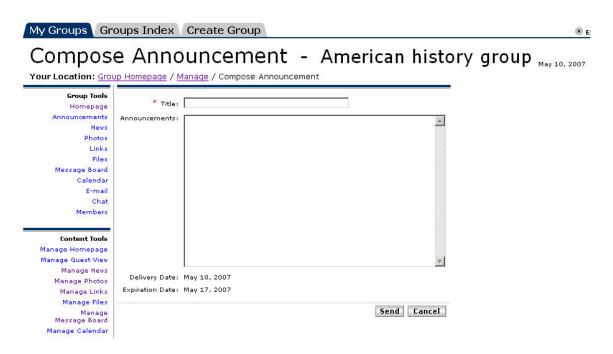
Follow these steps to create an announcement.

1. From the Content Tools menu, click the **Manage Announcements** link.

You see the Manage Announcements page. At this point, the screen should look similar to the following since there aren't any announcements:



- Click the New Announcement button.
- 3. You see a Compose Announcement screen similar to the screen shown below:



- 4. Enter a title for the announcement in the **Title** field (50 character maximum).
- 5. Enter the text of the announcement in the **Announcement** field.
- 6. Click **Send** to post the announcement.

Note: You see a message confirming your announcement has been delivered. The announcement will now appear on your group or course homepage and in each member's personal announcements channel for a seven day period, starting from the announcement post date.

7. Click the **Ok** button.

Creating Featured Content

Purpose

After you have added photos and links to the homepage, you can set some of these as featured content that will display to users when they first enter the online course or group. This featured content consists of a featured photo, a featured link, and a series of "top" links.

Note: By default, the featured content is set to be inactive on the homepage. Before you can see featured photos and links, you must first create a photo album for the group and activate a number of Internet links. If you don't want to activate a certain section, leave it set to inactive.

Steps

Follow these steps to create the initial featured content that will appear on the homepage.

1. From the Content Tools menu, click the **Manage Homepage** link.

You see homepage edit options similar to the following:



2. Locate the Featured Photo section of the page and click the **Edit** button.

Note: If there are no photos, you will first have to post photos to the group's album.

3. You see the Set Featured Photo window, which provides a view of all pictures contained in the group or course photo album, similar to the following:



Note: By default the **Section Inactive** radio button is checked, removing the featured photo from the homepage view.

4. To activate a featured photo, click the radio button next to a picture that you want to display and click the **Set Photo** button.

Note: You see a message stating the featured photo has been updated. Click **Ok** and you are returned to the Manage Homepage window.

5. Locate the Featured Link section of the page and click the **Edit** button.

Notes: You see the Set Featured Link window, which provides a view of all links posted for the group or course, similar to the following:

If there are no links, you will have to post some.

Set Featured Link - American history group May 10, 2007

Your Location: Group Homepage / Manage / Set Featured Link



6. By default, the Section Inactive option is checked, removing the featured link from the homepage view. To activate a featured link, click the radio button next to a link that you want to display and click the **Set Link** button.

Note: You see a message stating the featured link has been updated. Click **Ok** and you are returned to the Manage Homepage window.

7. Locate the Top 5 Links section of the page and click **Edit**.

Note: You see the Set Top 5 Links window, which provides a view of all links posted for the group or course, similar to the following. If no links appear, you will need to post some.



Note: By default the **Section Inactive** option is checked, removing the featured link from the homepage view.

8. To activate links to display under the Top 5 Links section, click the checkbox next to each link that you want to display and click the **Set Links** button.

Notes: You do not have to select five links, but you cannot select more.

9. You see a message stating the Top 5 Links have been updated. Click **Ok** and you are returned to the Manage Homepage window. You have now set the featured content that members will see when they access the homepage.

Managing News

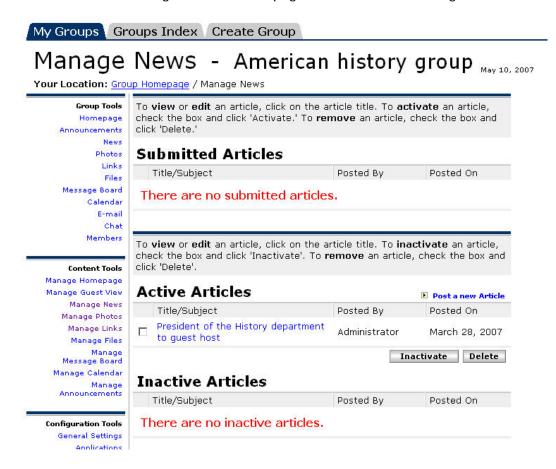
Purpose

Once you have added news articles to the homepage, other members will submit articles or information that they think should be posted. To maintain the news articles, you will review the items that have been submitted, post those that you think are valuable for the group or course, and if necessary inactivate or delete information that is currently posted.

Steps

Follow these steps to review submitted articles and maintain active articles.

- 1. From the Content Tools menu, click the **Manage News** link.
- 2. You see the Manage News Articles page similar to the following:



It contains three sections:

- **Submitted Articles:** A list of all articles that have been submitted by members, but not yet reviewed and posted. Submitted articles may be activated (posted) or deleted without reviewing them by using the buttons that appear on the page.
- Active Articles. A list of all active (posted) articles. You may inactivate or delete an active article by using the buttons that appear on the page. You may also edit the article or its related information by clicking on its title.
- Inactive Articles. A list of all articles that have been deactivated (removed from the homepage), but not yet deleted. You may reactivate or delete inactive articles by clicking on its title.

Note: On a regular basis you should review all submitted articles to delete those that you don't want to use and to post those that are appropriate.

3. You see the View Article window displaying the title of the article, the name of the person who submitted the article and the date it was submitted, and the text of the article.

At this point you can do one of two things:

- edit the article
- delete the article.

Note: Deleting the article removes it from the submitted list or from the page. Editing the article allows you to set its status to active or inactive, thereby posting it to the homepage or preserving it for later use.

4. To delete the article, click the **Delete** button.

Note: You are prompted by a dialog confirming that you want to delete the article. Once deleted, the article is no longer available for use.

5. To edit the article and post it or inactivate it, click the **Edit** button.

Note: You see the Edit Article window, which displays the selected Article and its information in data entry fields that allow you to modify the title and article text.

- 6. To change the article's title or information, click in the appropriate field and update the text.
- 7. To change status, select the appropriate option from the **Status** drop-down.
 - Note: The Active status posts the article to the homepage. The Inactive status places the article in the Inactive Articles list.
- 8. When you are finished editing the article or its status, click **Update**.
 - You see a message stating the article has been updated. Click **Done**. You are returned to Manage Links page.
- 9. As you begin to add articles to the homepage, you will occasionally need to delete, inactivate, or reactivate them as follows:
- 10. To delete any submitted, active, or inactive article, click the checkbox next to the article's title and then click the appropriate **Delete** button.
- 11. To inactivate an active article, click the checkbox next to the active article's title and click the **Inactivate** button.
- 12. To activate an inactive article, click the checkbox next to the inactive article's title and click the **Activate** button.