Phorum User Reference Manual

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Contents

1 Forums and Phorum - An introduction **3**
- 1.1 What is a forum? . . . 3
- 1.2 What is Phorum? . . . 3

2 Using Phorum **5**
- 2.1 Create a Profile . . . 5
- 2.2 Browsing and reading forums . . . 5
- 2.3 Creating topics, replying and editing posts . . . 5
- 2.4 Searching forums . . . 6
- 2.5 Private Messages . . . 6

3 Control Center **7**
- 3.1 Personal Profile . . . 7
- 3.2 Followed Topics . . . 7
- 3.3 Options . . . 7
- 3.4 My Files . . . 7

Introduction

This is the Phorum user reference manual for Phorum version 5.2.x and up. It is not intended for use with older versions of Phorum, although a lot of information will apply.

Please keep in mind that this manual is neither complete, nor final. If you have any remarks about it, please let us know in the development forum on our website. With your contribution, we hope to make this manual a useful tool for Phorum users in understanding and working with our software.

The Phorum development team
Phorum.org

Chapter 1

Forums and Phorum - An introduction

1.1 What is a forum?

A forum is an online system which allows a group of users to communicate. Users can then post threads (essentially a starting point for a conversation) in a number of separate sub forums (each one usually covering a different topic).

A simple example forum structure would be as follows:

- Announcements
- General Discussion
- Entertainment
- Technology

In this way, users can discuss numerous topics amongst themselves in a centralized community, in a more convenient way than other communication methods (e.g. email) can facilitate. Many websites have forums as a way for visitors to meet and discuss site content, and some sites are purely based around their forums. A number of administrators and/or moderators are also usually present on forum systems, making sure the forum runs smoothly and the users adhere to the rules specific to that forum.

1.2 What is Phorum?

Phorum is one of many forum scripts available that internet users can upload to their webspace. Started in 1999, it was designed to be as flexible as possible so as to meet the varying needs of different websites. It is extensively customisable, fast and stable, with a large ever-growing number of modules available to extend its functionality.

There are many forum scripts available for users to download, and while most of them focus on particular needs (some are feature packed, some are minimalistic, some

are designed specifically to be lightweight and fast), most of them also adhere to the same basic forum system outlined in the opening section of this guide; they use a structure of multiple categories/sub forums, in each of which users can post and reply to threads.

Chapter 2

Using Phorum

2.1 Create a Profile

To post, reply and subscribe to topics, and to personalise user settings through the Control Panel, you have to create a user profile. The possible exception to this rule is if the forum administrator allows anonymous posting in certain forums, in which case you do not need to register to post topics or reply to them. However, in most cases at least the majority of forums require creating a user profile to perform these actions.

To create a profile, follow these steps:

1. Click on the 'Create A New Profile' button at the top right of the forum page.

2. Fill out the form on the following page. Double check the email address you enter - it is important this is correct for validating your account and other functions. Also, make sure your password is strong by using an alphanumeric combination of characters at least 8 characters long.

3. Once you have clicked the submit button, you will be informed as to whether you need to take any further action to active your account. On some forums you may need to click on a verification link which will be sent to the email address you provided, a moderator may need to approve your account, or both.

2.2 Browsing and reading forums

2.3 Creating topics, replying and editing posts

A topics is the starting point of any conversation on a forum. An initial poster creates a subject and a post, and then other users can reply to it. In this way users can converse about specific 'topics' of conversation.

To create a topic, follow these steps:

1. Browse to the forum you want to post a topic in, then click on the 'New Topic' link above the topic list.

2. The posting interface will now be displayed. First, enter the subject of your topic, and then the message section. You can add smilies, formatting, links, pictures and more to your post by using the editor tools located above the message box, which is present on most Phorum installations. Hover over the buttons for a description of what they do, and for help with BBCode (Bulletin Board Code) and smilies, click on the ? button on the right.

You can also choose to add your signature to the post, and to follow the topic. Additionally, you may post attachments by clicking on 'Attach a file...'. When you are finished, you can click on 'Preview' to look at your post before submitting it, or post it by clicking 'Post message'.

To reply to topics, browse to the topic you want to reply to then click on the Reply link below a post, or fill out the posting form at the bottom of the topic. Then follow the same procedure described above.

You can also edit your posts after submitting them by clicking on the 'Edit' link beneath your post. The administrator can set a specific time limit within which you can edit your post. Some of the actions you can perform are limited by administrative settings. For example, an administrator can prevent users from starting new topics, replying to them, editing posts, adding attachments and following topics within specific forums.



2.4 Searching forums

2.5 Private Messages

Chapter 3

Control Center

3.1 Personal Profile

3.2 Followed Topics

3.3 Options

3.4 My Files