

Discussion Forums


Introduction

Discussion forums are a great way of keeping the members of your church in contact with each other throughout the week by providing a place where they can discuss everything from theological issues to football! This quick start guide shows you how to create a topic-based discussion forum and perform the role of a 'moderator'.


Creating a new forum

- If you haven't logged into the web site already, do so now. Click the **Login** link at the top of the home page and enter the login name and password as supplied.
- Once you have successfully logged in click the **web office** link at the top of the home page. The Web Office will be displayed shortly afterwards.

Every forum belongs to one of the groups in your church; some forums are intended for use by the whole church (for example, "chat", "community needs", and "announcements") and so they will be located in a group used by the whole church, such as **church life**. Other forums are intended for use by a specific group – for example your prayer team may wish to create a private forum for sharing prayer topics.

- Select a  **group folder** where you would like the forum to be located.
- Select the **Forums** tab to display the current list of forums in this group.

Not sure what a group folder is? Forums tab not available? For more help see the quick start guide called "Web Office Tour".

- Click the  **Add a forum to the *groupname* group** task at the bottom of the work pane.
- Enter the details of the new forum as follows:

Title:


Description:


Security:

Group Members	<input type="text" value="Can read and write messages"/>
Other Site Members	<input type="text" value="Cannot see this forum"/>
Public Users	<input type="text" value="Cannot see this forum"/>






- The **security** options allow you to select who can see the forum and who can contribute; for each group of people using the web site select whether the forum is hidden, read only, or read and write.
- Finally, click the **create forum** button. The list of forums above will be updated shortly afterwards.

The forum moderator

At the bottom of each forum on your church web site is a list of **moderators** – a list made up of all those people who have the **forums and chatter** permission for the group where the forum is located. Although new contributions to a forum appear on the web site immediately, any message which is considered inappropriate or offensive can be  flagged by anyone as “abusive”; the message will be removed and can only be re-instated after it has been reviewed by a moderator. **Moderators** therefore have the final “say” over which messages can (and cannot) be published in a forum.

In the **web office** groups which contain messages which have been flagged as abusive are marked with the  symbol in the **site manager** area of the **navigation pane**.

To review an abusive message.

- Click on the  **group folder** in the navigation pane marked by the  symbol.
- Select the **forums** tab in the **work pane**. A list of forums will be displayed shortly afterwards.
- The forum containing the flagged message will be preceded by the  symbol. Click the forum title to display the threads inside.
- The thread containing the flagged message will be preceded by the  symbol. Click the thread title to display the messages inside.
- The message which has been flagged will be preceded by the  symbol. Click the abbreviated message text to display the entire contents of the message.
 - If the message requires minor changes before it can be released edit the text as necessary before clicking the **save changes and release message** button.
 - If the message requires no change before it can be released click the **save changes and release message** button.
 - If the message needs to be removed entirely click the **delete message** button.

In some cases an entire thread may have been flagged as abusive. In this instance none of the messages in the list will be marked; instead the following symbol appears at the top of the messages list:



Click on any of the abbreviated messages to review the contents of this thread, making any changes as necessary.

- If the thread can be released after editing or removing some of the messages click the **release the *threadname* thread** task link.
- If the thread needs to be removed entirely click the **delete the *threadname* thread** task link; click the **yes** button to confirm your selection.