Content - What is it?

Last Updated Monday, 09 April 2007

User Level:

Manager; Administrator; Super Administrator.

Description:

Content is the fuel of the web site vehicle! It can have many guises. In specific reference to the Joomla! Content Management System (CMS) this includes:

- Content Items
- Static Content Items

However, just to clarify even further, the overall content (small 'c') of a web site can also include:

- all the images
- other media elements,
- the menus, plus
- the layout provided by the templates and associated CSS files, and finally
- all the functionality that is provided by web site extensions

for example:

- forums,
- messages,
- galleries,
- editors, and
- a multitude of other elements.

In the context of the menu=>Content entries, that this section of the Help Screens is concerned with, it is specifically the

Content Items and Static Content Items and their various 'containers' that will be covered.

The first question may well be 'What is the difference between the two types of Content Item?

A Static Content Item could be described as a stand-alone document. It does not have/need any further classification, as a result of it perhaps having a very specific topic that can be covered in a single document. It does not therefore need to be grouped into a Section or Category, with other documents of a similar topic, for example.

It is still possible to easily group a number of Static Content Items together by using Menu Items discussed under the Menu section of these Help Screens. That said, their strength comes from being a single document which is specifically referenced by its own, individual, Menu Item.

Content Items, on the other hand, hate being on their own! In fact, they cannot be left as unassociated documents. They have to belong to a Category, which in turn must belong to a Section.

A very simplistic view to understanding this concept is that Content Items are like your favourite flaked-corn, breakfast cereal. There's usually a lot of individual flakes and these are contained in a foil or plastic bag to keep them all together. The bag is the equivalent of a Category. However, one brand of flaked-corn in a bag could very easily look like another (also runs the risk of getting crushed!) so each bag is contained in a cardboard box. The box is the equivalent of a Section. It further distinguishes the flaked-corn by it's brand name for example.

The other main difference between these two types of Content is that Static Content Items do not have the Intro (Introduction) field that Content Items do. The article can only be published in its entirety. It cannot be added to a Blog style display with just a hint of its content displayed, as a Content Item can.

Â NOTE: It is important to remember that before creating a Content Item, a Section must be created and, a Category must be added to that. On a standard installation of the Joomla! Core files there is an option to populate the database with model data. This is strongly recommended for all new users of Joomla!. If you are new to CMS, or the web in general, this provides an easy way to see what you can achieve and how to achieve it. For those with more experience, it will serve as aÂ quick walk through of the features generally available, and how to achieve much (though not all) of the functionality of a Joomla! CMS installation.

Related Information:

Â Content Items
Â Category Manager

Â Static Content Items
Â Static Content Manager

Â Section Manager
Â

NOTE: If you have any comments or suggestions regarding this Help screen then please post them in the Suggestions, Modifications, and Corrections forum in the User Documentation Work Group.

Thank you!

Â

The User Documentation Team