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Mailer Contrib



Allows users to "subscribe" to regularly scheduled e-mails containing either:

- A report on changes to all topics that have changed within a particular Foswiki web.
- A report on changes to a specific topic or set of topics the user can define flexibly.
- The entire content of a specific topic or set of topics. This is referred to as "news mode."
- The companion plugin (Foswiki:Extensions.SubscribePlugin) lets you trivially add a "Subscribe to changes" button to topics

tools/mailnotify

The central component of MailerContrib is a script, `tools/mailnotify`, that generates and sends out the emails based on analysis of

1. users' subcriptions listed in the WebNotify topic in each web, and
2. changes within the respective webs.

This script is designed to be run from `cron` (or an equivalent off-line job scheduler), or from the command-line.

The script collates the changes emails so that each subscriber only receives one changes notification for all changes in all webs in the Foswiki. Furthermore, users can elect to receive just summaries of changes, or the entire content of topics that have changed.

Each web can optionally contain a topic called WebNotify.

Users subscribe to email notifications using their WikiName or an alternative email address, and can specify the webs/topics they wish to track, Whole groups of users can also be subscribed for notification.

The general format of a subscription is:

three spaces * *subscriber* [: *topics*]

Where *subscriber* can be a WikiName, an E-mail address, or a group name. If *subscriber* contains any characters that are not legal in an email address, then it must be enclosed in 'single' or "double" quotes.

topics is an optional space-separated list of topics:

- ... **without** a *Web.* prefix
- ...that exist in this web.

Users may further customize the specific content they will receive using the following controls:

- **Using wild-card character in topic names** - You can use `*` in a topic name, where it is treated as a wildcard character. A `*` will match zero or more other characters - so, for example, `Fred*` will match all topic names starting with `Fred`, `*Fred` will match all topic names *ending* with `Fred`, and `*` will match *all* topic names.
- **Unsubscribing to specific topics** - Each topic may optionally be preceded by a '+' or '-' sign. The '+' sign means "subscribe to this topic". The '-' sign means "unsubscribe" or "don't send notifications regarding this particular topic". This allows users to elect to filter out certain topics. Topic filters ('-') take precedence over topic includes ('+') i.e. if you unsubscribe from a topic it will cancel out any subscriptions to that topic.
- **Including child-topics in subscription** - Each topic may optionally be followed by an integer in parentheses, indicating the depth of the tree of children below that topic. Changes in all these children will be detected and reported along with changes to the topic itself. *Note* This uses the Foswiki "Topic parent" feature.
- **Subscribing to entire topic ("news mode")** - Each topic may optionally be immediately followed by an exclamation mark ! and/or a question mark ? with no intervening spaces, indicating that the topic (and children if there is a tree depth specifier as well) should be mailed out as **complete topics** instead of change summaries. ! causes the full topic to be mailed every time *even if there have been no changes*, and ? will mail the full topic only if there have been changes. One can limit the content of the subscribed topic to send out by inserting %STARTPUBLISH% and %STOPPUBLISH% markers within the topic. Note that the script mailnotify can be run with the options -nochanges or -nonews so that you can run the two mode on different schedules (see details).

Examples: Subscribe Daisy to all changes to topics in this web.

```
* daisy.cutter@flowers.com
```

Subscribe Daisy to all changes to topics that start with `Web`.

```
* daisy.cutter@flowers.com : Web*
```

Subscribe Daisy to changes to topics starting with `Petal`, and their immediate children, WeedKillers and children to a depth of 3, and all topics that match start with `Pretty` and end with `Flowers` e.g. `PrettyPinkFlowers`

```
* DaisyCutter: Petal* (1) WeedKillers (3) Pretty*Flowers
```

Subscribe StarTrekFan to changes to all topics that start with `Star` **except** those that end in `Wars`, `sInTheirEyes` or `shipTroopers`.

```
* StarTrekFan: Star* - *Wars - *sInTheirEyes - *shipTroopers
```

Subscribe Daisy to the full content of NewsLetter whenever it has changed

```
* daisy@flowers.com: NewsLetter?
```

Subscribe buttercup to NewsLetter and its immediate children, even if it hasn't changed.

```
* buttercup@flowers.com: NewsLetter! (1)
```

Subscribe GardenGroup (which includes Petunia) to all changed topics under AllnewsLetters to a depth of 3. Then unsubscribe Petunia from the ManureNewsLetter, which she would normally get as a member of

GardenGroup?:

```
* GardenGroup: AllNewsLetters? (3)
* petunia@flowers.com: - ManureNewsLetter
```

Subscribe `IT:admins` (a non-Foswiki group defined by an alternate user mapping) to all changes to Web* topics.

```
* 'IT:admins' : Web*
```

A user may be listed many times in the WebNotify topic. Where a user has several lines in WebNotify that all match the same topic, they will only be notified about *changes* that topic *once* (though they will still receive individual mails for news topics).

If a *group* is listed for notification, the group will be recursively expanded to the e-mail addresses of all members.

__ Warning: Because an email address is not linked to a user name, there is no way for Foswiki to check access controls for subscribers identified by email addresses. A subscriber identified by an email address alone will only be sent change notifications if the topic they are subscribed to is readable by guest users. You can limit what email addresses can be used in %NOTIFYTOPIC%, or even block use of emails altogther, using the `{MailerContrib}{EmailFilterIn} setting in =configure`.

Tip: List names in alphabetical order to make it easier to find the names.

In the future it is intended that individual users will be able to control the frequency with which they are notified of topic changes, by changing a schedule specification in their home topic. However at present, the notification schedule is controlled by the frequency of activation of the `cron` job that runs the `mailnotify` script.

Note that when using the "news mode" `!` or `?` specifiers the entire topic text is mailed out as HTML. The `newsletter` template is used to generate the content in this mail, using whatever skin is selected in the topic being mailed.

In addition, the %STARTPUBLISH% and %STOPPUBLISH% markers used by to delimit the text to be published are respected in news mode.

Foswiki/Contrib/MailerContrib code library

The second part of the module is a code library that provides the services for other applications to modify the subscription topics through a clean, well documented API. This allows (for example) plugin developers to add (for example) a "Register me for this newsletter" button to their pages. Developers should refer to the POD documentation for the WebNotify class as their starting point.

Installation Instructions

You do not need to install anything in the browser to use this extension. The following instructions are for the administrator who installs the extension on the server.

Open configure, and open the "Extensions" section. Use "Find More Extensions" to get a list of available extensions. Select "Install".

If you have any problems, or if the extension isn't available in `configure`, then you can still install manually from the command-line. See http://foswiki.org/Support/ManuallyInstallingExtensions for more help.

- To make sure the installation was successful, run the `mailnotify` script from the command line, with no parameters. In this case it will print out what it would have done to `STDOUT`.

Additional settings

- You can change the regular expression that matches email addresses in WebNotify using the `{MailerContrib}{EmailFilterIn} setting in =configure`. This allows you to limit the domains to which emails can be sent, or even block email addresses altogether.

Setting up your cron job(s)

You need to set up a `cron` (or equivalent) job to run the `tools/mailnotify` perl script.

The script is used as follows: `perl -I` *`bin`* `mailnotify [-q] [-nonews] [-nochanges] [` *`web1 web2 ... webN`* `]`

bin	path to the Foswiki bin directory, so that the script can find the rest of Foswiki.
`-q`	Don't print progress information
`-nonews`	Skip the "news mode" (do not process subscriptions that include "!" or "?" following the topic)
`-nochanges`	Only run the news mode. (only process subscriptions that include "!" or "?" following the topic)
`web1 web2 ... webN`	List of webs to process, separated by spaces or commas. The default is to process all webs. Wildcards (*) are supported.

Setting up cron can be done in many ways. Below is an ultrashort overview which may be sufficient.

Crontab syntax is 5 numbers followed by the command
`A B C D E  command to be executed`
A is minutes (0-59)
B is hour (0-23)
C is day of month (1-31)
D is month (1-12)
E day of week (0-6) (Sunday=0) An asterix '*' means any value
If you choose to setup the cron by editing the system wide /etc/crontab file the syntax is `A B C D E username command-to-be-executed`
To learn more about cron and crontab Google for `crontab` for more information.

For example, assuming Foswiki was installed at `/usr/local/foswiki`, this cron entry:

```
0 0 * * * cd /usr/local/foswiki && perl -I bin tools/mailnotify -q Public Private
```

will generate change notifications for the `Public` and `Private` webs every night at midnight.

```
0 0 * * * cd /usr/local/foswiki && perl -I bin tools/mailnotify -q -Sandbox
```

will generate change notifications for all webs, except the `Sandbox` web.

```
0 0 * * 0 cd /usr/local/foswiki && perl -I bin tools/mailnotify -nochanges
```

will generate newsletters from **all** webs every week on midnight Saturday but will not process the non-newsletter subscriptions.

```
0 0 * * * cd /usr/local/foswiki && perl -I bin tools/mailnotify -nonews
```

will generate change notifications for all webs every night at midnight but will not process the newsletter subscriptions.

Note: Multiple instances of mailnotify script are not allowed to be executed simutaneously. If you need to run the script multiple times with different options, make sure the cron jobs are scheduled so a previous run has finished before the next starts. You can also write a small script that runs mailnotify in sequence as described in .

Note: Even if you run separate -nonews and -nochanges cron jobs, the subscriptions using the "?" feature will only show the topics that changed since last time the mailnotify script was run even if it was run with -nonews. Separate newsletter jobs work best with the unconditional "!" mode.

Tailoring the email format

The changes mails sent to subscribers are based on a Foswiki template called `mailnotify`. This template must contain the following definitions.

`HTML:before`	Section of a HTML mail before the changes
`HTML:middle`	Repeated in a HTML mail for each change
`HTML:after`	Section of a HTML mail after the changes
`PLAIN:before`	Section of a plain text mail before the changes
`PLAIN:middle`	Repeated in a plain text mail for each changes
`PLAIN:after`	Section of a plain text mail after the changes
`MailNotifyBody`	All the above are embedded in this. %HTML_TEXT% expands to the HTML obtained by expanding the `HTML:*` templates, and %PLAIN_TEXT% from the `PLAIN:*` templates.

The default template sends multipart mails containing both HTML and plaintext versions.

To tailor the email format please avoid editing the distributed mailnotify.tmpl file as you will regret when it later gets overwritten when you upgrade Foswiki. Instead you should either use a skin setting to choose the template file or use web part of the template search path rules.

It is recommended to use the skin method as it is easier to control, and requires less hacking around. Especially if you need to use the same tailoring for many or all webs.

- Simple global tailoring used in all webs using your normal default skin
  - Make a copy of `templates/mailnotify.tmpl` called `templates/mailnotify.skiname.tmpl`. For example `templates/mailnotify.pattern.tmpl` and modify this copy to your need. If you use the NatSkin simply use `templates/mailnotify.nat.tmpl` instead

- Using a dummy skin name globally
  - In %USERSWEB%.SitePreferences define a setting `* Set SKIN = notifyskin,pattern` where the notifyskin is the dummy skin name and the pattern in this example is the real skin.
  - Create a `templates/mailnotify.notifyskin.tmpl` with your tailorings

- Using a dummy skin name per web
    - In each web where you want a special mailnotify template add the setting `* Set SKIN = notifywebname,pattern` where the notifywebname is the dummy skin name for this web and the pattern in this example is the real skin.
    - For each web where you need a special mailnotify template create a `templates/mailnotify.notifywebname.tmpl` with your tailorings

- Using the web path in the templates directory
    - For each web where you want a special mailnotify create subdirectories in `templates` with the same names as the webs and place a `templates/mailnotify.tmpl` in these subdirectories with your tailorings

Newsletters are sent after formatting using the standard `view` template, using whatever skin is selected in the topic being mailed.

Using a topic defined email template

If you want to use a topic to define the notify email format this is possible with a small workaround. Before you go ahead and do this you need to consider the security implication. Making the email format available to any user from a browser means that spammers can abuse this to create messages where they can spoof the from address. Only use this method if your Foswiki installation is safely behind a firewall and your users can be trusted.

The method can best be shown with an example. In the following we...

- Define a custom mailnotify template based on a skin setting in WebNotify
- Allow the users to define the mail format in a topic called WebNotifyCustomTemplate

Here are the steps

First we create a file `templates/mailnotify.customnotify.tmpl` which only contains these two lines

```
%TMPL:INCLUDE{"mailnotify"}%
%TMPL:INCLUDE{"WebNotifyCustom"}%
```

In the webs where you want the topic defined mail format we add the setting `* Set SKIN = customnotify,pattern` (assuming pattern is the normal skin)

And we create a topic in the web called WebNotifyCustomTemplate which contains the entire mailnotify template you want to use. Simply copy the content from `templates/mailnotify.tmpl` to this template and do the tailoring.

Contrib Info

Another great Foswiki extension from the **WikiRing** - working together to improve your wiki experience!

Many thanks to the following sponsors for supporting this work:

- Wind River
- WikiGardens

Author:	Crawford Currie
Copyright ©:	2004, Wind River Systems; 2008, http://WikiRing.com; 2009 Foswiki Contributors
License:	GPL
Version:	5716 (2009-12-04)
Release:	4 Dec 2009
Change History:	
4 Dec 2009	Foswikitask:Item8354: Martin Rowe fixed a problem with STARTPUBLISH in newsletters corrupting the template
17 Oct 2009	Foswikitask:Item1302: Removed the documentation of the -news mode which was actually never really implemented. Instead added two new -nonews and -nochanges modes which enables running mailnotify in newsletter mode with another schedule than the changes mode. If you upgrade and used the -news option with mailnotify things will work like you are used to as the -news option made no difference (old bug).
15 Oct 2009	Foswikitask:Item2260: Make the feature that allows defining the email template based in either skin or web path. And improve the documentation so people can learn how to tailor the emails that the WebNotify feature sends. Foswikitask:Item1603: use quotes to protect topic names with odd characters in them
20 Sep 2009	Small documentation update for Foswiki 1.0.7 release (RELEASE and adding parent)
23 Apr 2009	Foswikitask:Item1501: Minor bug in logfile output fixed
03 Dec 2008	Re-released for the Foswiki project
15 Oct 2008	TWikibug:Item: generalised code to enable Foswiki:Extensions.SubscribePlugin to delegate parsing to MailerContrib - Foswiki:Main.SvenDowideit
14 Oct 2008	TWikibug:Item6066: fixed issue for user mappings where cuid = login - Foswiki:Main.SvenDowideit
27 Aug 2008	TWikibug:Item5949: fixed problem with unsubscribe that should result in an empty subscription
03 Aug 2008	TWiki 4.2.1 release version
27 Jul 2008	TWikibug:Item5776: Foswiki:Main.KennethLavrsen added note to warn against running multiple instances of mailnotify at the same time.
15 May 2008	TWikibug:Item5232: Foswiki:Main.CrawfordCurrie added support for non-ascii alphanumerics in topic names to WebNotify. TWikibug:Item5630: Foswiki:Main.SvenDowideit fixed some spelling errors
25 Jan 2008	TWikibug:Item4812: added TWiki:Main.BobGoldstein's noexpand patch for groups
2 Nov 2007	TWikibug:Item4818: added quotes to support non-alphabetic and other wierd group names TWikibug:Item4887: corrected minor rendering error TWikibug:Item4917: removed dependence on symbolic web names
9 Sep 2007	TWikibug:Item4326 workaround for possible error in WebNotify API in old releases, Should not affect most users.
6 Sep 2007	TWikibug:Item4488 doc tweaks
14550	TWikibug:Item4461 - 'Changed' link now points to most recent changes, not the entire history
22 Jun	TWikibug:Item4284 - added access control checks and email filter

2007	
21 May 2007	TWikibug:Item3969 - 8bit email fix (Foswiki:Main.WillNorris)
13623	TWikibug:Item4014 no changes was resetting the notify time to 0. Thanks to TWiki:Main.JeffCrawford for nailing this down.
12496	TWikibug:Item3415 mailnotify did not send notifications to intranet users because of wrong call to findUser.
11672	Added newsletter support, after much harassment from Foswiki:Main.LynnwoodBrown
11534	TWikibug:Item2153 Clarified docs. TWikibug:Item2698 Improved error reporting.
8808	TWikibug:Item1654 mailnotify must enter the command_line context
8625	TWikibug:Item1508 Making the dashes in the separatator clearer
8606	TWikibug:Item1508 MailerContrib: Brushing up HTML mailnotify template
8602	TWikibug:Item1508 MailerContrib: Cleaning up plaintext e-mail template, removing TEXTAREA
8522	TWikibug:Item1511 arguments to getScriptUrl in wrong order
8434	TWikibug:Item1465 Fix 'TWiki.' to '%TWIKIEB%.'
8398	TWikibug:Item1460 polished up the comment a bit
8308	TWikibug:Item1362 moving mailnotify cron script
7848	TWikibug:Item1167 forced all mail operations to generate absolute URLs
7568	TWikibug:tem910 use SCRIPTURL{view} instead of complex url expr
6864	TWikibug:tem624 mailer templates moved the the right places
6861	TWikibug:tem624 Added proper templates support for plain text mails
6809	TWikibug:tem623 don't print anything if verbosity is switched off.
6659	TWikibug:tem528 Updated MailerContrib. it's working and the sendmail parameter is used.
6474	TWikibug:tem420 removed spurious remove_obsolete_locks from MailerContrib
5924	TWikibug:tem153 fix mail URL-fixing scheme
5269	Minor doc fixes
5266	Doc tidy-ups, added filtering of _ webs, added obsolete lock script
5264	Changed default to add web name to user name (I hope)
5263	Minor doc tidyups
5261	Documentation changes, and fixed to scan all webs.
5253	runnable as CGI script, minor bugfixes, removed dependency on DBCacheContrib
5234	Minor doc changes
5231	Made a change an object, added unit tests to CVS, lots of testing.
4 March 2005	1.010 Dakar release ready.
12 Oct 2004	1.004 Added support for anti-subscriptions. Doc fixes from TWiki:Main.PeterThoeny. Bug fixes to permissions code. Back-off and retry if the mailer can't be reached (should really be in Net::sendEmail)
6 Oct 2004	1.003 Excluded _ webs from processing, added `bin/remove_obsolete_locks` for full reverse-compatibility
1 Oct 2004	1.002 PeterThoeny provided additional documentation
27 Sep 2004	1.001 runnable as CGI script, minor bugfixes, removed dependency on DBCacheContrib
8 Sep 2004	1.000 Initial version
Home:	http://foswiki.org/Extensions/MailerContrib
Support:	http://foswiki.org/Support/MailerContrib

Edit | Attach | Print version | History: %REVISIONS% | Backlinks | Raw View | More topic actions

Topic revision: r1 - 17 Jan 2010 - 15:15:41 - WikiGuest

- . System

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- User Documentation
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