

**Clean Out the Cobwebs:
Rethinking Your Web Presence with Joomla CMS
Mark A. Smith – LiSUG Conference October 2008 - SUNY IT – Utica NY**

Joomla: Not Your Father's Website

- ❖ Content Management System (CMS)
- ❖ Both Website & Repository
- ❖ Database Driven
- ❖ Modular – Extensible – Plug & Play
- ❖ Template Design Structure
- ❖ Administrative Backend Managed

Why Is Joomla An Option?

- ❖ Open Source and Free (Strong Active User Community)
- ❖ Easy to Keep Content Fresh
- ❖ Archives Your Content
- ❖ Extensible Web Apps Plug-ins for 2.0'ness
- ❖ No HTML, CSS, XML, CFM programming required
- ❖ Polls, Blogs, RSS feeds, Search, Contacts, Breadcrumbs, Popularity, Page Delivery, etc. All Out of the Box
- ❖ Calendars, wikis, image galleries, media players, editors, forums, etc. easily added
- ❖ Change Design Elements Instantly
- ❖ Easy WYSIWYG & Distributable Editing

More Good'ness

- ❖ Embedded Relational, Hierarchical Linking Structure for Content
- ❖ Administrative Backend Organizes & Monitors Content (including Statistics)
- ❖ Portable (exportable database)
- ❖ Templates Do All The Work (editable html and css from within the admin module)
- ❖ User Accounting (if you want to go there)
- ❖ Multiple Media Format Friendly
- ❖ Highly Customizable at Every Level (from item to site-wide)
- ❖ ..more

In A Nutshell

The System Provides an End-User & Content Creator Environment that is: Familiar, Flexible & Customizable

Sounds Good! What Do I Need?

- ❖ A minimally cooperative IT department or your own server
- ❖ MYSQL and PHP
- ❖ Joomla Software: versions for Win Server and Unix
- ❖ Time to Experiment (learning curve to initially customize the structure)
- ❖ A Plan to Rethink Your Content & Nav. Structure
- ❖ Could outsource to hosting service such as BlueHost.com for Instant Setup (\$6.95)

OK. How Does the Thing Work?

The Basics

- I. Organizing the Information
- II. Layout: Template / Module Positions
- III. Functionality: Modules-Components-Extensions
- IV. Navigation - Menus

I. Organization

Hierarchical Organization

1. Sections
2. Categories .. may have multiple categories under a section
3. Articles .. may have multiple articles under a category

II. Layouts

- ❖ Ruled By Editable Templates
- ❖ Your “Look” is governed by Templates.
- ❖ Templates contain a map of “module positions” that identify where you might wish to position content

III. Functionality - Extensions

- ❖ Joomla comes with a great deal of functionality right out of the box. (others widely available, many free)
- ❖ 3 Types of “Extensions”
 1. **Components** – Banners, Contacts, NewsFeeds, Polls, Search, Weblinks, etc.
 2. **Modules** - Archives, Breadcrumbs, Login, Footer, Menus, Popularity, Recent Posts, NewsFlash, Random Image, Related Items, Search, Whos’ Online, RSS, Statistics, etc.
 3. **Plugins** – Authentication, Editors, Ratings, Adv. Search Eng., Ratings, Email Cloaking, etc.

IV. Navigation

- ❖ All Done with “Menus”
- ❖ A robust function within Admin
- ❖ Menus utilize your Sections, Categories, & Articles structure that automates menus that are logical. (ie. a menu of all your “categories”)
- ❖ The most powerful & frustrating concept/feature in Joomla. I found it difficult to wrap my head around this.

Why You Might Think Twice About Using Joomla

- ❖ If you lack a minimally cooperative IT dept. or access to a server.
- ❖ If your design must exactly/closely match a campus style/design (but could build your own template)
- ❖ If you are easily frustrated by a learning curve. However, much simpler than Aleph. And once the layout is done ..its a snap to maintain.

Materials & Resources: (they’re everywhere .. check youtube for great visual tutorials)

My Presentation Materials, Links & Joomla Resources available at
<http://lisug08joomla.wordpress.com/>