BlogX Readme & Documentation

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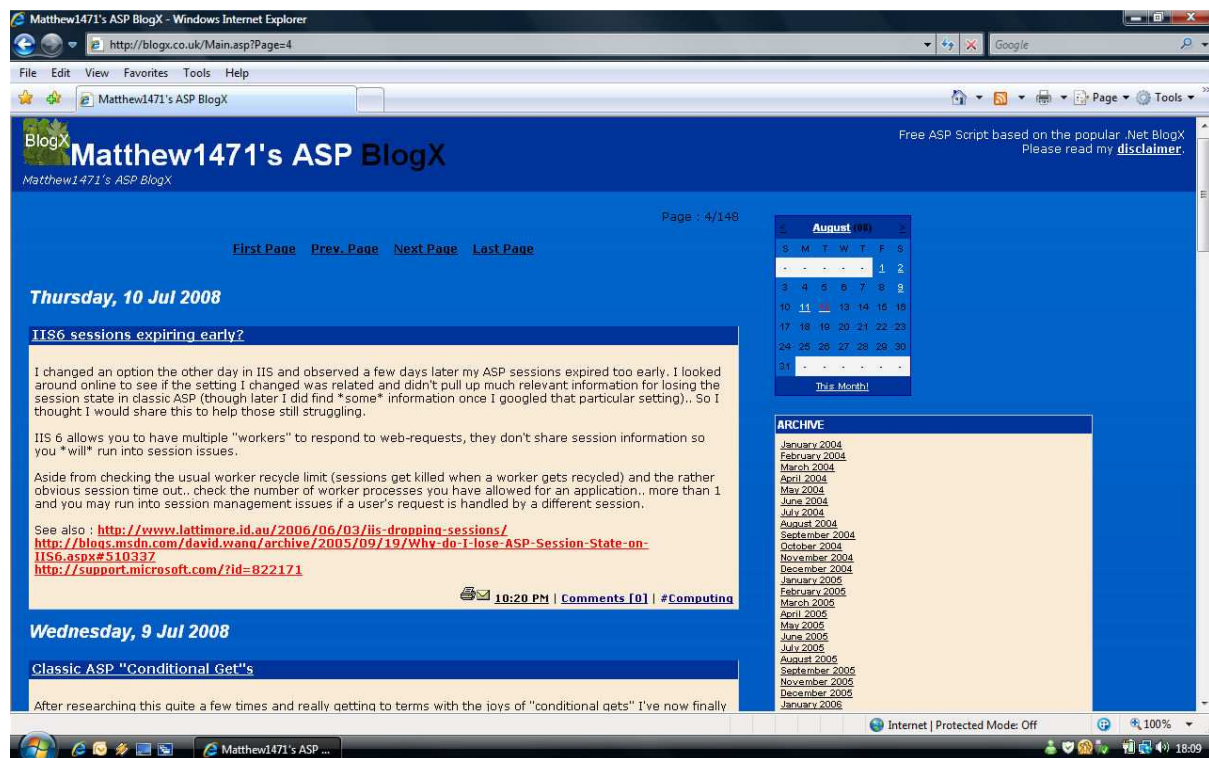
Installation

Thanks your interest in Matthew1471's Blogging solution. This file should give you the quickest guide to installing and using BlogX in a few quick steps.

Installation Requirements

- Internet Information Services (preferably running on Windows Server 2003)
- Microsoft Access Driver version 2000 or later.

Installation Instructions

Step 1. - Extract all the files in the zip's "WWWroot" directory to your web server's content directory. e.g. C:\Inetpub\wwwroot\BlogX\

Step 2. - Extract all the files in the zip's "Database" folder to a non-public database directory. e.g. C:\Inetpub\Database\

Step 3. - Edit "Includes\Config.asp" (e.g. from the following folder "C:\Inetpub\wwwroot\BlogX\Includes\Config.asp") edit the path to your "SiteURL" and additionally "DataFile" & "SharedFilesPath" (if different from the examples).

Step 4. - Ensure the database folder can be written to by the user that your web server runs under (i.e. IUSER_ServerName must have write privileges for this folder). Ensure the Images folder can also be written to by this user (for pingback and image upload..etc).

Now load up your blogging page e.g. http://yourdomain.com/BlogX/ and login using the username **admin** and the password **letmein**.

Known Issues

Q: I get a blank white screen.

A: If you are running NAV (Norton Anti Virus) on your server, Turn off "Script blocking". Norton script blocking is renowned for interfering with ASP scripts.

Q: I receive an error about a "Disallowed Parent Path" (Active Server Pages error "ASP 0131", "Disallowed Parent Path ","The Include file "../Includes/Header.asp" cannot contain ".." to indicate the parent directory").

A: In order to avoid this problem please do the following:

1. Go to your IIS Manger
2. Right click the default web site
3. Choose Properties >
4. Select Home Directory Tab
5. Click 'Configuration' button
6. Select App Options Tab
7. Check the Enable Parent Paths
8. Click OK and your new configuration will be saved.

Q: I receive an error about "File is in use" (Active Server Pages error, "File is in use.")

A: The IUSER account cannot remove the database temp file, make sure the IUSER can write to the entire database folder.

Help/Questions

Do not be afraid to ask questions, even simple ones. Help is available by visiting http://matthew1471.co.uk/Support.asp.

Suggestions

You may submit your suggestions to me at http://matthew1471.co.uk/Contact.asp.

BlogX Feature Configuration

There are many features to BlogX. Most do not require setting up, however system administrators may wish to amend or alter some of the functionality.

Administrative Features

There are 2 main places to customise your BlogX's configuration. Online at the "Config" section of the admin panel and offline in the Includes/Config.asp file.

If you are a hosting provider you may not want a blog owner to change certain configuration options which is why some settings are only accessible by editing the Includes/Config.asp file. There are many reasons a server administrator may wish to disable certain features (decrease processor utilisation, reduce site bandwidth, enhance security).

Admin Panel Configurable Features

SiteName - What The Site Is Called (Shows Up At The Top)

CookieName - Random Text Value Which Is Stored On Clients Computer & Verified To See If They Have Logged In.

Copyright - Shows Up In Each Pages' Footer.

Description - Shown Just Underneath The Site Name (and as the RSS title).

Comments - If ticked, Will allow users to comment on entries.

EntriesPerPage - How Many Entries To Show On One Page (and in the RSS).

ReaderPassword - (If not empty) Restrict your blog to only allow in users who know this password.

SiteSubTitle - Shown On The Top-Right

Polls - If ticked allows polls in the navigation

Show Categories - If ticked allows categories in the navigation (and entry footers)

SortByDay - Make The Calendar Clickable.

BackgroundColor - The Background Colour In The Body Tags (should the style sheet fail).

12HourTimes - AM/PM or 24Hour Clock Times.

Logging - Save Where People Are Coming From In The "Referrers" Table.

Includes/Config.asp Configurable Features

CommentNotification - Sends a subscribed commenter an e-mail **every** time a user comment is made.

SiteURL - Used to help the site to refer to itself and prevent others from accessing via other addresses (i.e. http://blogx.co.uk http://www.blogx.co.uk/).

AboutPage – Link to the local About.asp file or, if false, link to the one on blogX.co.uk instead.

AllowEditingLinks - Setting to 1 allows a logged in user to edit the links file online.

ArgoSoftMailServer - If your server is running "Argosoft Mail Server" allows posting from e-mail.

CalendarCheck - Checks whether all calendar dates have entries, if they do it will provide a link in the calendar (Changing this to 0 increases BlogX's speed).

CommentNotify – Sends the blog owner an e-mail **every** time a user comment is made.

MailingList - Allows you to run a mailing list and displays the link at the bottom.

LegacyMode - This will remove all functionality that wasn't in the original BlogX (see section below).

NotifyPingOMatic - Lists your blog on the PingOMatic.com website whenever you make a post.

NoDate - Stops separating entries by day.

OtherLinks - Display the section "Other Links" from the OtherLinks table.

Register - Notifies BlogX.co.uk that you want your site to be linked to from the "Who Uses" page.

RSS - Lets people access a small RSS feed.

RSSImage - Displays an image in your RSS feed (The image in the RSS folder).

TimeOffset - Change the time by this many MINUTES e.g. "60" adds 1 hour to the server's time

UseImagesInEditor - If 0 buttons are used in the editor, otherwise if 1, images are used in the editor (e.g. for bold, centre, underline).

UseExternalPlugin - If 1 will dynamically include the "Plugin.asp" file to the navigation.

XMLTimeZone - The times specified in the RSS are "GMT", "UT", "EST", "EDT", "CST", "CDT", "MST", "MDT", "PST", "PDT" see RFC822.

E-mail Setup

BlogX can send comment notification e-mails, mailing list e-mails and even allow your users to e-mail you by clicking the mail icon next to an entry. Each e-mail allows the recipient to opt-out of receiving e-mails that they had previously subscribed to and e-mails to the administrator feature a convenient ban button to prevent certain senders from e-mailing.

To correctly set up and use e-mails one must perform the following. Once logged in click "Email Settings" in the admin panel. The page will then attempt to use various components and list the components it detects. Once the page has loaded, you will see a checkbox "Enable Email" the first step is to tick this box. Select the E-mail component that you want BlogX to use from the drop down box. Next enter in the mail server address that you wish the site to connect to and the administrative e-mail address that you want comments and messages to be sent to. Click save and users can now send you comments. In future toggling "Enable Email" allows you to globally turn on and off e-mail functionality.

Note: If your server's e-mail component is not shown here and it is definitely installed, please contact me and I will add it.

Legacy Mode

As mentioned in the "Includes/Config.asp Configurable Features" there is the option to turn on "legacy mode".

In 2003 a Microsoft employee Chris Anderson created a blogging script that ran on ASP.Net. It was programmed in C#. Chris publicly shared the code without any license requirements, warranty or support.

In 2004 I discovered his blog code and could think of many additional features and improvements to make (this was also at a time when the ASP .Net runtime was extremely slow and not very reliable). I also did not believe that many webhosts supported ASP.Net at that time and that excluded a lot of people from running it. I also could not program in C# at that time.

BlogX was therefore completely re-programmed from scratch in classic visual basic code and additional features and bug fixes were added. For those looking to emulate the original ASP.Net BlogX blog I have included a "LegacyMode" which is useful for speed comparisons and for those who would prefer to keep their blog simple.

Below is a screenshot of a BlogX blog website running in legacy mode:
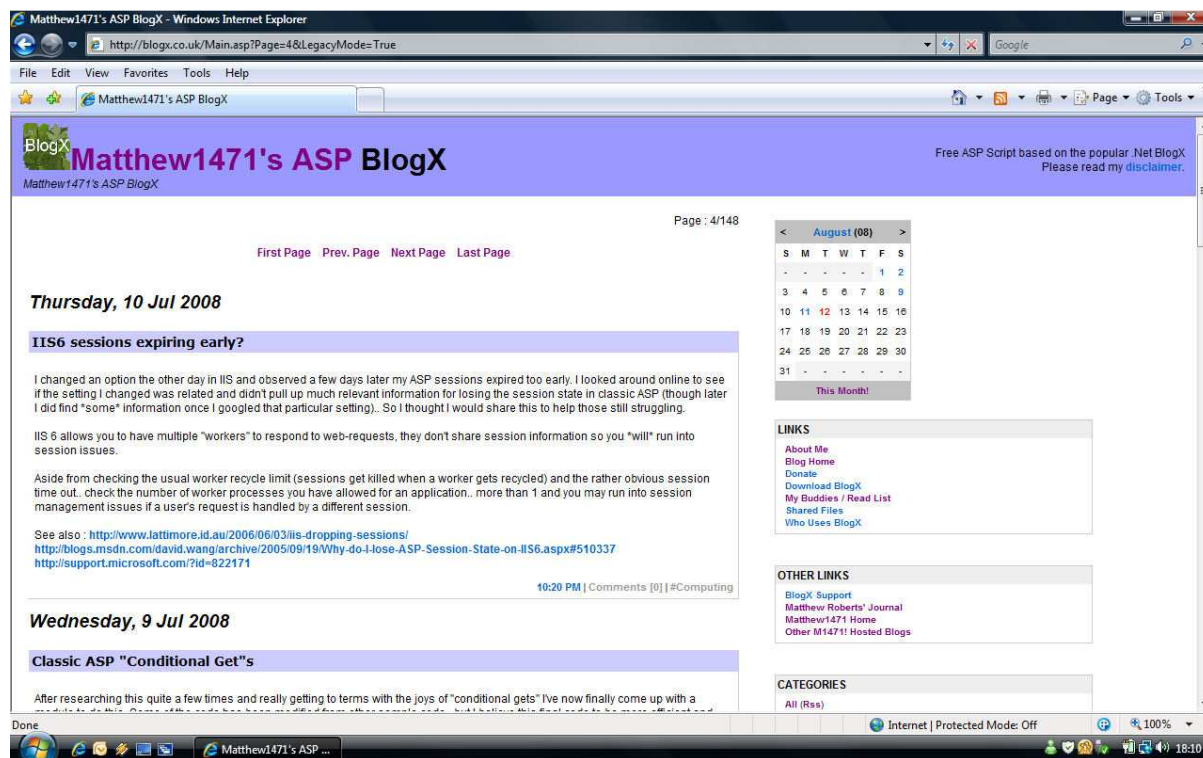
As you can see the archive and many other features have been turned off as well as the new style sheets.

Update Information

BlogX has been actively and continuously developed from the beginning of 2004. Consequently it is very difficult to ensure that all upgrade paths are supported. Sometimes after observing various parts of the database could be further optimised or new features can be added the structure of the database has had to be changed. Database changes are often documented in the BlogX change log (http://blogx.co.uk/About.asp). The following information will more than likely require knowledge of databases, Microsoft Access table editing and fields.

New Version Notification

To discover if a new version is available you can click "Check For Update" in the admin panel of your blog when logged in.

How To Update

The easiest way to update is to first create a backup copy of your website's files (and the database) so that you can recover your website if the upgrade does not run smoothly.

Some versions of BlogX have a Setup.asp which will check that all of the expected tables and fields are present in a database file. I would recommend running this against the old database file and copying the fields or missing tables from the new database to the old database. Knowledge of table editing in Microsoft Access is required for this part. Re-running Setup.asp after making changes will give you a clear indication as to whether BlogX should run smoothly with that database file.

Now extract the new "WWWroot" from the latest ZIP archive available on my website.

Your BlogX should now be up to date. If you struggle to follow these instructions, change your password (for security reasons) and contact me asking for my e-mail address and I may offer (depending on my schedule) for you to send your database to me and I will update it for you.

Credits

BlogX uses the following public domain code snippets:

- "inc_mail.asp" from "Max Web Portal" (http://www.maxwebportal.com)
  Why: Handles a range of mail server components.
  Modifications: Wording & variables modified.

- "CharCount" for Visual Basic (http://www.freevbcode.com/ShowCode.asp?ID=1025)
  Why: Counts the number of times a search query comes up in a post.
  Modifications: Converted to ASP.

- "IIF" for ASP (http://www.developerfusion.com/show/1606)
  Why: Was used in the port of CharCount to ASP.
  Modifications: Unmodified.

- XML-RPC for ASP (http://aspxmlrpc.sourceforge.net/)
  Why: Runs the XML-RPC engine for "Pingback".
  Modifications: Filters "." to allow new method names.

- ASP PoorMan's Spell Check (http://www.kirchmeier.org/code/pmsc/)
  Why: Runs the dictionary component.
  Modifications: Handled by the BlogX GUI, has a "User Dictionary".

- Firefox JavaScript compatibility update was a user submission from IndaUK.
  Why: Makes the IE specific JS run on Firefox.

- a simple AS2 Flash MP3 Player (http://www.skylab.ws/?p=116)
  Why: Provides our podcast player.
  Modifications: Unmodified.