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WEB FORUM IMPLEMENTATION WITH USER AUTHENTICATION

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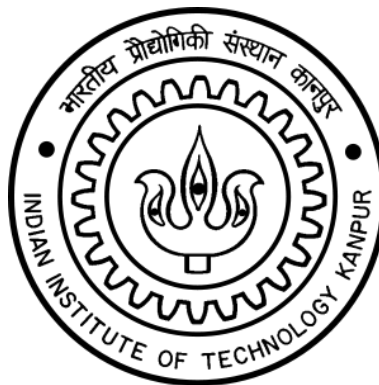
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Abstract

One good way to get users to return to your site is to offer Web forums. These can be used for purposes as varied as philosophical discussion groups and product technical support. Here we implement a Web forum in PHP. An alternative is to use an existing package, such as Phorum, to set up your forums. Web forums are sometimes also called discussion boards or threaded discussion groups. The idea of a forum is that people can post articles or questions to them, and others can read and reply to their questions. Each topic of discussion in a forum is called a thread. We will implement a Web forum called Courses.Garuna with the following functionality. Users will be able to:

1 Introduction

We will implement a Web forum called Courses. Garuna with the following functionality. Users will be able to:

- User authentication with forgot/reset password, logout and session control
- Start new threads of discussion by posting articles
- Post articles in reply to existing articles
- View articles that have been posted
- View the threads of conversation in the forum
- View the relationship between articles, that is, see which articles are replies to other articles

2 The Problem

Setting up a forum is actually quite an interesting problem. We need some way of storing the articles in a database with author, title, date, and content information. The way most threaded discussion software works is that, along with showing you the available articles, it will show you the relationship between articles. That is, you are able to see which articles are replies to

other articles (and which article they're following up) and which articles are new topics of discussion. Deciding how to display these relationships will require some careful thought. For this system, a user should be able to view an individual message, a thread of conversation with the relationships shown, or all the threads on the system. Users must also be able to post new topics or replies. This is the easy part.

3 Solution Components

Storing and retrieving the author and text of a message is easy. The most difficult part of this application is finding a database structure that will store the information we want, and a way of navigating that structure efficiently. The tricks to getting this all to work are:

- Finding a way to map this tree structure into storage—in our case, into a MySQL database.
- Finding a way to reconstruct the data as required.

We began by implementing a MySQL database that enabled us to store articles between use. We build simple interfaces to enable saving of articles. When we load the list of articles for viewing, we loaded the headers of each article into a tree php class. Each node will contain an article's headers and a set of the replies to that article.

When we load the list of articles for viewing, we load the headers of each article into a tree PHP class. Each node will contain an article's headers and a set of the replies to that article. The replies are stored in an array. Each reply will itself be a tree node, that can contain an array of replies to that article, which are themselves tree nodes, and so on. This continues until we reach the so-called leaf nodes of the tree, the nodes that do not have any replies. We then have a tree structure.

4 Solution Overview

There are only three real pages in the application. We have a main index page that shows all the articles in the forum as links to the articles. From here, one will be able to add a new article, view a listed article, or change the way the articles are viewed by expanding and collapsing branches of the

tree. (More on this in a minute.) From the article view, one will be able to post a reply to that article or view the existing replies to that article. The new article page enables one to enter a new post, either a reply to an existing message, or a new unrelated message.

5 Other Implementations

Apart from the forum we have allowed user authentication, with forgot/reset password, change password, logout, etc; The special part of the project was also the stunning visual look of the webpages and interactivity powered by JavaScript.

6 Instruction

Go to localhost/website/website and then you follow the instructions. There you go!