



Alkacon OAMP Newsletter Module

Version 2.0.0

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1 Abstract

This document describes the installation, configuration and usage of the Alkacon OpenCms Newsletter module version 2.0.0 for OpenCms 8. With the newsletter module, it is possible to send newsletter emails to subscribers of different mailing lists.

The mailing lists and subscribers can be easily managed inside the OpenCms workplace. A configurable frontend resource type, that can be added to your website by drag & drop, allows the subscription or unsubscription to/from mailing lists for website visitors.

2 General purpose of the Alkacon OpenCms Newsletter module

The module extends a basic OpenCms 8 installation with the capability to send newsletter emails to subscribers of different mailing lists. It provides the following features:

- Configurable mailing list subscription/unsubscription resource type which can be added to your website by drag & drop
- Editable newsletter content that can be sent to different mailing lists
- Management of different newsletter units for organizational units containing their own mailing lists and subscribers in the OpenCms Administration view
- Configurable scheduled job to clean up subscribed email addresses which were not confirmed within a configurable time range
- Possibility to extend the module to send newsletters based on an own implementation using another structured XML content

3 Installation

Note: To use the Alkacon OpenCms newsletter module version 2.0.0, you need OpenCms version 8.0.1 or later. The module is not compatible with older OpenCms versions.

Note: OpenCms version 7.5.x is compatible with Alkacon OpenCms newsletter module version 1.0.2 (available here: http://www.alkacon.com/downloads/alkacon/Alkacon_OAMP_Newsletter_1.0.2.zip).

Note: OpenCms version 7.0.5 and 7.0.4 is compatible with Alkacon OpenCms newsletter module version 1.0.1 (available here: http://www.alkacon.com/downloads/alkacon/Alkacon_OAMP_Newsletter_1.0.1.zip).

It requires the latest installation of the Alkacon OpenCms 8 Commons module `com.alkacon.opencms.v8.commons`, which is also part of the distribution zip file. That module contains basic functionality which is required by most Alkacon OpenCms modules.

Step by step installation procedure:

1. Go to the OpenCms Administration view
2. Click "Module Management" and select either "Import Module from Server" if the module was placed in the `WEB-INF/packages/modules/` folder of your OpenCms installation, or select "Import Module with HTTP" to upload the module from your local file system
3. Select the Alkacon OpenCms newsletter module zip file `com.alkacon.opencms.v8.newsletter_2.0.0.zip` to import, if not already installed, import the `com.alkacon.opencms.v8.commons_1.0.0.zip` module first
4. Check if the Jar file `com.alkacon.opencms.v8.newsletter.jar` has been deployed in the `WEB-INF/lib/` folder after installation

5. Edit the OpenCms configuration file WEB-INF/config/opencms-vfs.xml. Insert the following line as subnode of the node <widgets> near the end of the file:

```
<widget  
class="com.alkacon.opencms.v8.newsletter.CmsMailinglistWidget"  
alias="V8MailinglistWidget"/>
```
6. Restart your servlet container afterwards

3.1 Configuration

The newsletter module can be used out of the box; usually there is no additional configuration necessary.

3.1.1 Basic configuration options

The module can be configured with the following optional module parameters:

- **project_name:** the name of an offline project which is used to delete subscribers. If the parameter is not set, the module tries to use the "Offline" project of a default OpenCms installation for the operation.
- **user_password:** the password for subscribers which are created in the administration view or by using the subscription front end JSP form. If the parameter is not set, the module uses the default password "Uw82-Qn!" for new created subscribers.

3.1.2 Advanced configuration options

If a different newsletter content type should be used to send newsletters, the class generating the newsletter email must be configured using the following module parameter:

- **class_maildata:** the fully qualified name of the class generating the newsletter email and the recipients of the newsletter from a structured XML content resource. Usually setting this parameter is not necessary. Have a look at section 5.1 for more details about this.

3.1.3 Changing folder and name pattern

3.1.3.1 Module configuration

By default a new Alkacon Newsletter subscription or email preview is generated and saved automatically in a dedicated folder.

These folders are created automatically in the central .content folder of your site (e.g. /sites/default/.content). All new generated Alkacon Newsletter subscriptions or email previews are named and numbered automatically as defined in the Module configuration file (e.g. /system/modules/com.alkacon.opencms.v8.newsletter/.config)

3.1.3.2 Sitemap configuration

To override this default mechanism, you can edit the Sitemap configuration (e.g. /sites/default/.content/.config) and add/modify the Resource types "alkacon-v8-newsletter" and "alkacon-v8-nl-subscribe" and select a different folder or name pattern under the tab "Resource Types".

For further information see also:

http://www.opencms-wiki.org/Configuration_of_OpenCms_Sitemap_Properties

4 Module usage

Before the newsletter module can be properly used, at least one new newsletter unit has to be created. A newsletter unit consists of one or more mailings lists and their subscribers. One or more newsletter units can be created for each organizational unit of an OpenCms installation.

- Go to the OpenCms Administration view and click "Account Management"
- If you have set up several organizational units (OUs) in OpenCms before, you will see a list of OUs and have to select an organizational unit for which a newsletter subunit should be created. If you never set up OUs before the root organizational unit in a basic OpenCms installation will be used and nothing has to be selected
- Create a new newsletter unit in the "Organizational Unit Management" by clicking on "New newsletter unit". All newsletter units automatically have the name prefix "nl_" added to their name
- Reload the OpenCms workplace
- A new icon "Newsletter Management" tool is now visible in the Administration view for Account managers of the newsletter unit
- You should create at least one mailing list using the "Newsletter Management"

Note: Only users which have the role "Account manager" in this unit are able to view and use the "Newsletter Management" administration features.

The complete configuration part of the mailing lists and their subscribers as well as sending the newsletter emails has to be done in the OpenCms Newsletter Management tool in the Administration view.

Mailing lists can be created, edited and removed, subscribers can be imported or assigned to different mailing lists. Newsletter contents can be edited, published and sent to mailing lists.

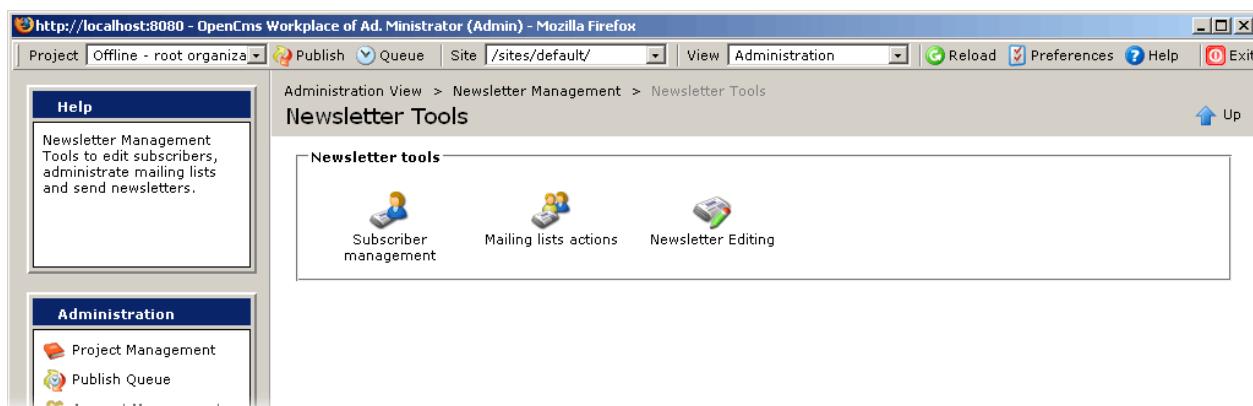


Image 1: Newsletter Management with subscriber management, mailing list actions and newsletter editing options

Note: The initial creation of newsletter contents has to be done in the OpenCms Explorer view.

Note: You can only send a newsletter if you are not in the online project.

4.1 Resource types

The module provides three structured content resource types: for the subscription front end and for the newsletter content to send. These resources can be easily added to your website by drag & drop from the ADE toolbar.

The available resource types to use are:

- **Newsletter (alkacon-v8-newsletter):** the newsletter contents which can be sent to mailing list subscribers.
Important : be sure to publish any modifications of these files, because only published and unchanged newsletter contents can be sent to mailing lists in the Newsletter Management. They can be placed anywhere inside a site structure by drag & drop from ADE. It is recommended to place them on a page not accessible by the public (e.g. password protected area).
- **Newsletter subscription (alkacon-v8-nl-subscribe):** the configurable subscription form front end. This page can be placed in your website structure by drag & drop. Be sure that you select the mailing list where the users can be subscribed to or unsubscribed from by editing this resource type. Allows the configuration of all subscription texts and confirmation messages in the ADE editor as well as configuring the confirmation email layout and texts.

Additionally a third resource type is available in the workplace:

- **Newsletter mail configuration (alkacon-v8-nl-mailconf):** optional configuration file for the HTML email configuration that can be referenced in the newsletter structured contents as well as in the subscription front end resource type. This allows you to configure your HTML email layout once and reuse the configuration for each generated email.

4.2 Module Frontend usage

After successful installation and configuration of the OAMP Newsletter Module, it is ready to use. New newsletter subscription widgets can be added by Drag & Drop from the ADE toolbar.

4.2.1 Adding a new OAMP Newsletter subscription / unsubscription box to a page

To add a new OAMP Newsletter subscription to an existing page, click on the "Add Wizard" symbol in the ADE toolbar.

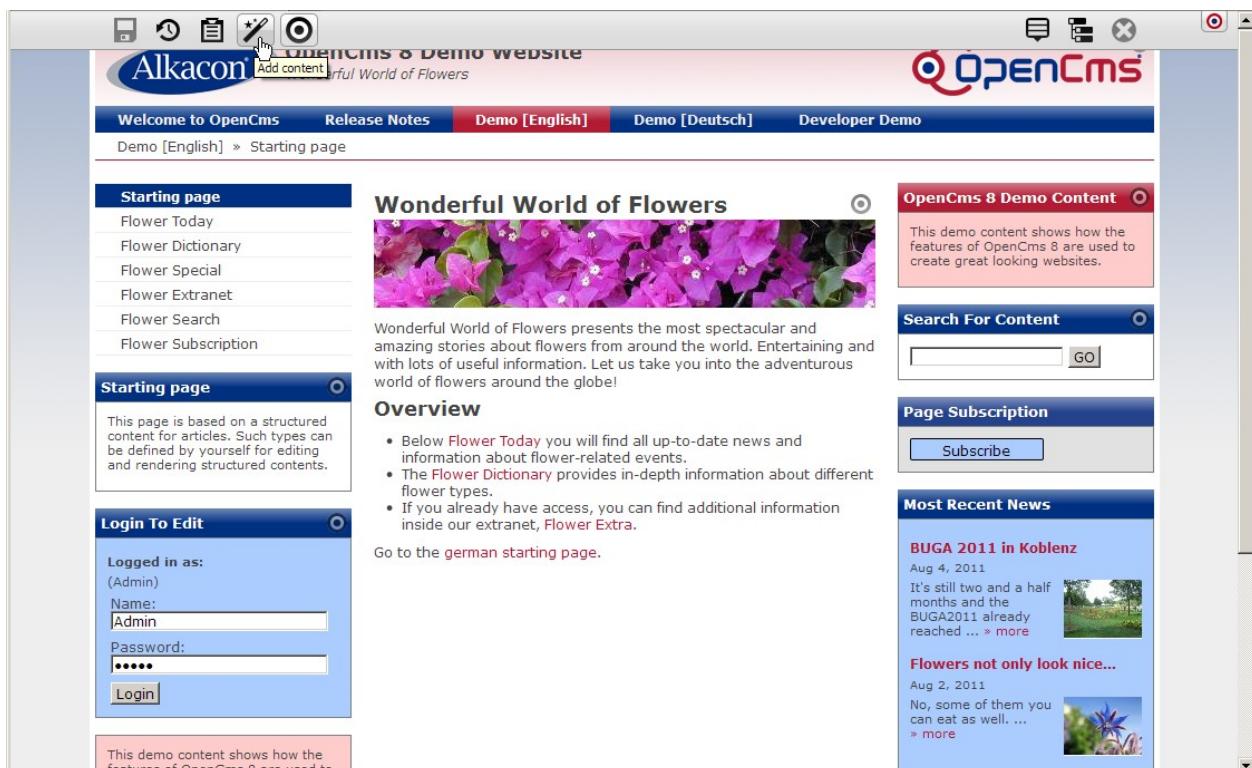


Image 2: Open the "Add Wizard" in the ADE toolbar.

By default the new resource type **Newsletter subscription** is available through the entire site and can be added to pages by Drag & Drop. Just click on the "Move to page" icon and keep the mousebutton pressed. Now you can move the new Newsletter subscription where you need it and release the mouse-button.

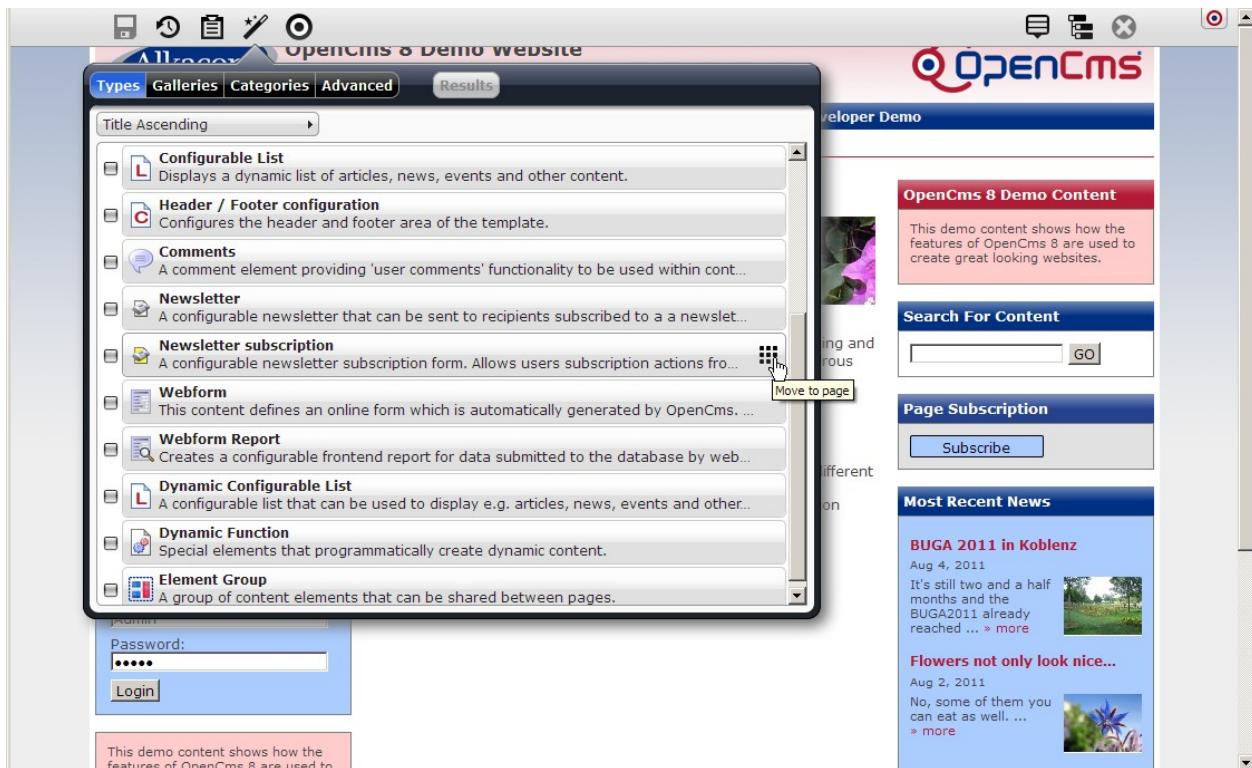


Image 3: Drag a new Newsletter subscription from the "Add Wizard".

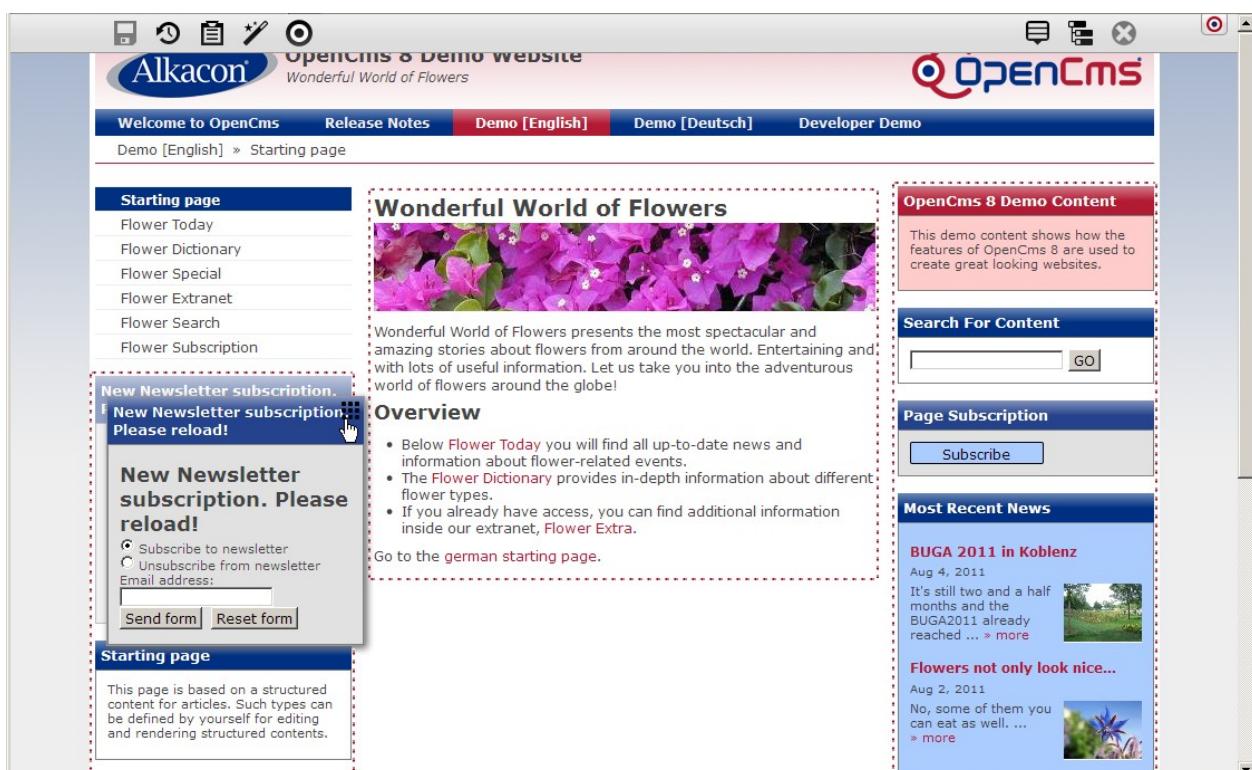


Image 4: Dropping the new Newsletter subscription to destination container.

4.2.2 Editing an OAMP Newsletter subscription

To edit the newly created OAMP Newsletter subscription click on the ADE icon in the upper right corner of the OAMP Newsletter subscription and select "Edit".

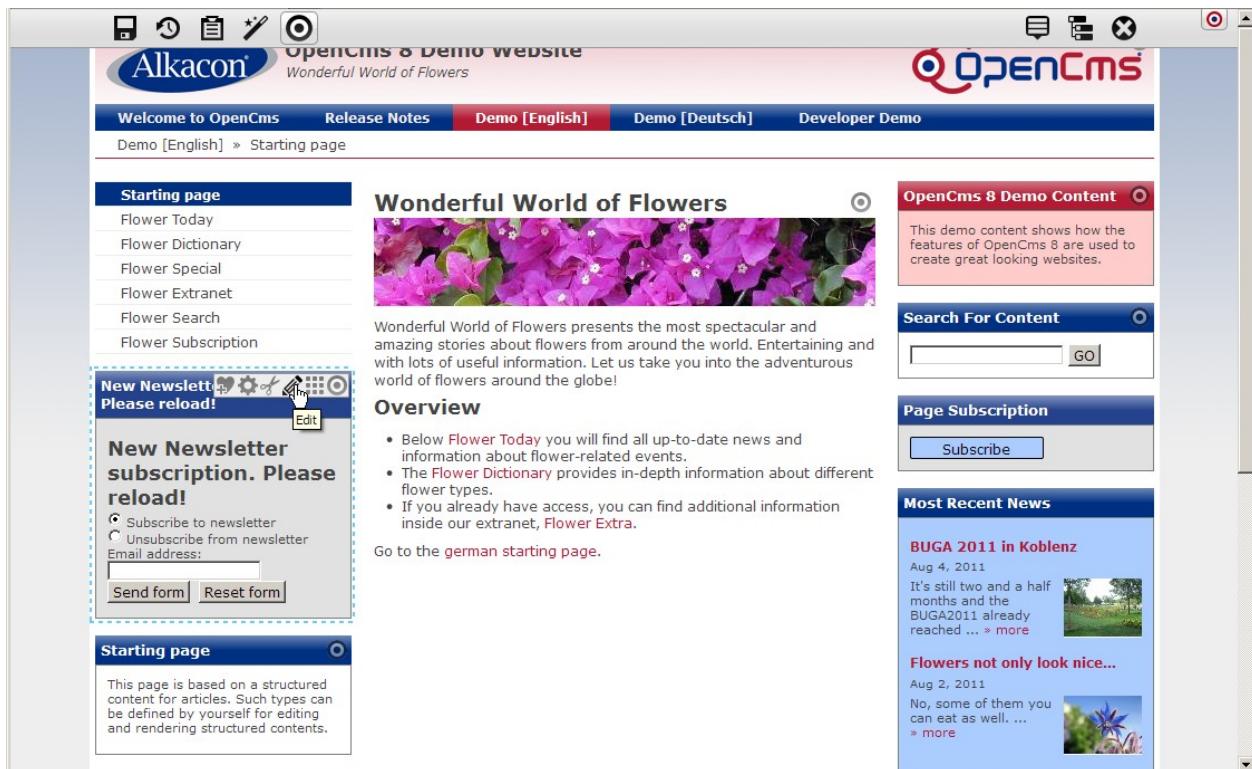


Image 5: Open the ADE Editor.

The following fields are available for editing:

- **Title:** The title of the newsletter subscription page.
- **Mailing list:** The mailing list the emails are subscribed to.
- **Subscription texts:**
 - **Headline:** The headline that is displayed on the subscription form page.
 - **Text:** The text for the subscription form page.
 - **Subscribe OK:** The text that is shown after a successful subscription.
 - **Subscribe Error:** The text that is shown if the subscription failed.
 - **Unsubscribe OK:** The text that is shown after a successful cancellation of a subscription.
 - **Unsubscribe Error:** The text that is shown if the cancellation of a subscription failed.
 - **Send last newsletter:**
 - **Active:** If checked, an option to get the last sent newsletter is shown after a successful subscription.
 - **Headline:** The headline for the option to get the last sent newsletter.
 - **Send OK:** The text is shown after successfully sending the last newsletter.
 - **Send Error:** The text is shown if sending the last newsletter failed.
 - **Confirmation:**
 - **Confirmation:** If checked, the email confirmation of subscription actions is enabled. For security reasons, this should always be enabled.
 - **Texts subscribe:**
 - **Headline:** The headline for the confirmation page.
 - **Confirm OK:** The text that is shown on the confirmation page. A possible macro to use is %(email) for the email address.

- **Confirm Error:** The text that is shown if the confirmation failed. A possible macro to use is %(email) for the email address.
 - **Mail subject:** The subject of the confirmation mail. Possible macros to use are %(email) for the email address and %(link) for the confirmation link.
 - **Mail text:** The text of the confirmation mail. Possible macros to use are %(email) for the email address and %(link) for the confirmation link.
- **Texts unsubscribe:**
 - **Headline:** The headline for the confirmation page.
 - **Confirm OK:** The text that is shown on the confirmation page. A possible macro to use is %(email) for the email address.
 - **Confirm Error:** The text that is shown if the confirmation failed. A possible macro to use is %(email) for the email address.
 - **Mail subject:** The subject of the confirmation mail. Possible macros to use are %(email) for the email address and %(link) for the confirmation link.
 - **Mail text:** The text of the confirmation mail. Possible macros to use are %(email) for the email address and %(link) for the confirmation link.
 - **Confirmation mail:**
 - **Email from:** The email address that is used as sender address for the confirmation mails.
 - **Name from:** The name that is used as sender name for the confirmation mails.
 - **Mail config:** Optional newsletter mail configuration file that overrides the mail head and foot configuration fields below.
 - **Mail head:** The html for the confirmation mail head, can contain CSS style sheet to format the email text.
 - **Mail foot:** The html for the confirmation mail head, usually closes the html content body.

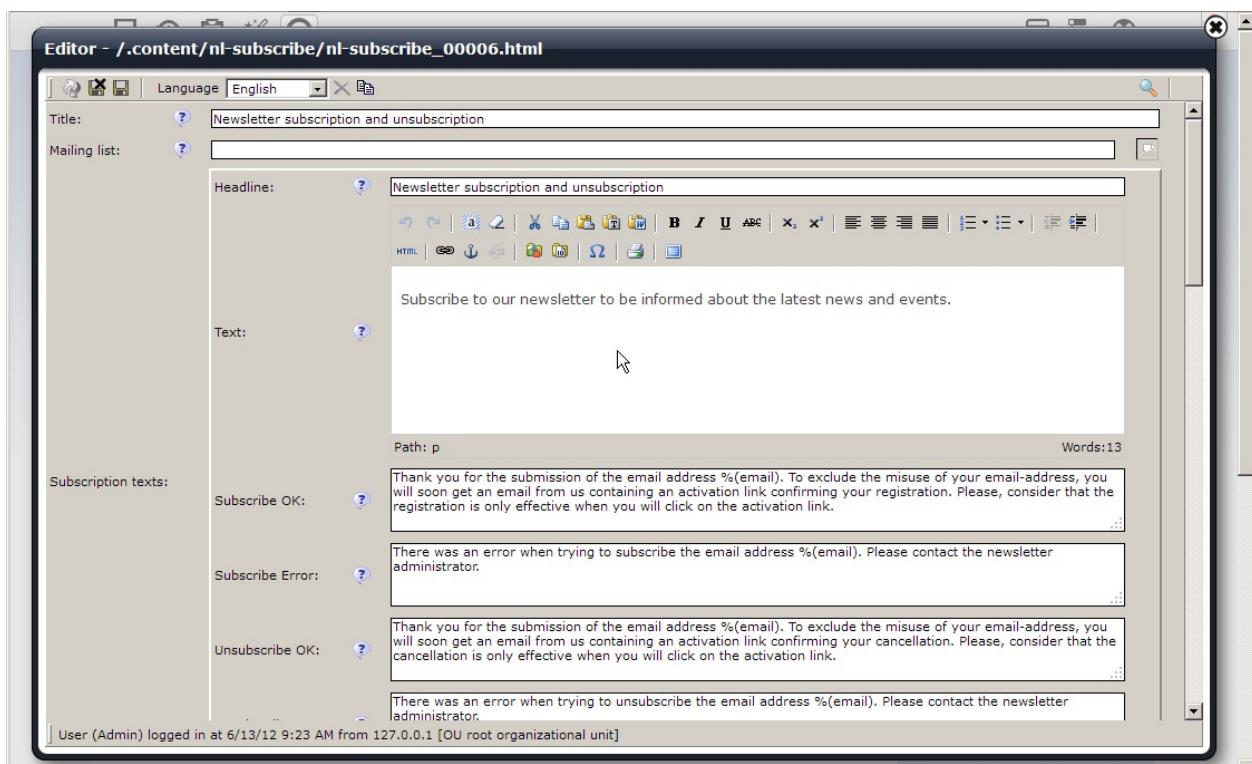


Image 6: Alkacon OAMP Newsletter subscription in ADE Editor.

4.2.3 Adding an existing OAMP Newsletter subscription to your page

You can also select an existing OAMP Newsletter subscription from the "Add Wizard" by double-clicking the Resource type OAMP Newsletter subscription or by checking the box left to it and clicking "Results". From the displayed results, select the OAMP Newsletter subscription you need and add it to your page by Drag & Drop.

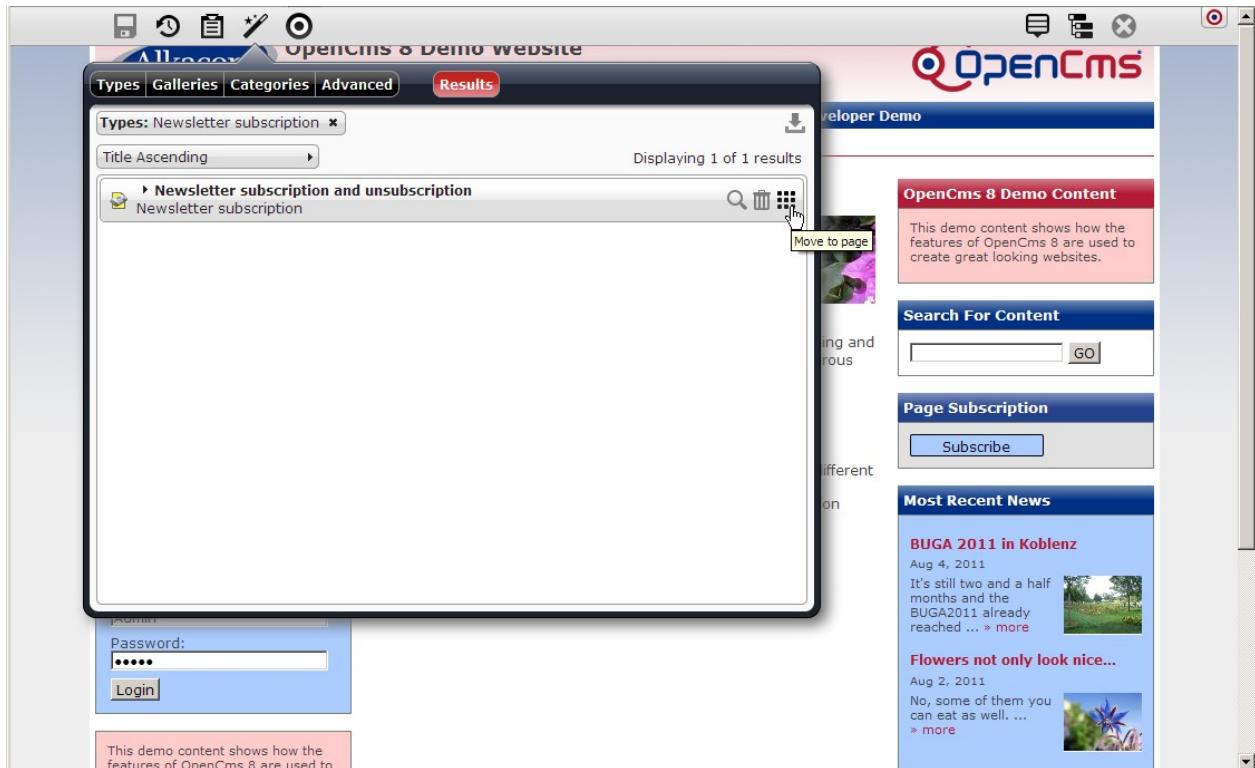


Image 7: Drag & Drop of an existing OAMP Newsletter subscription in ADE.

4.2.4 Adding a new OAMP Newsletter email preview to a page

To add a new OAMP Newsletter email preview to an existing page, click on the "Add Wizard" symbol in the ADE toolbar.

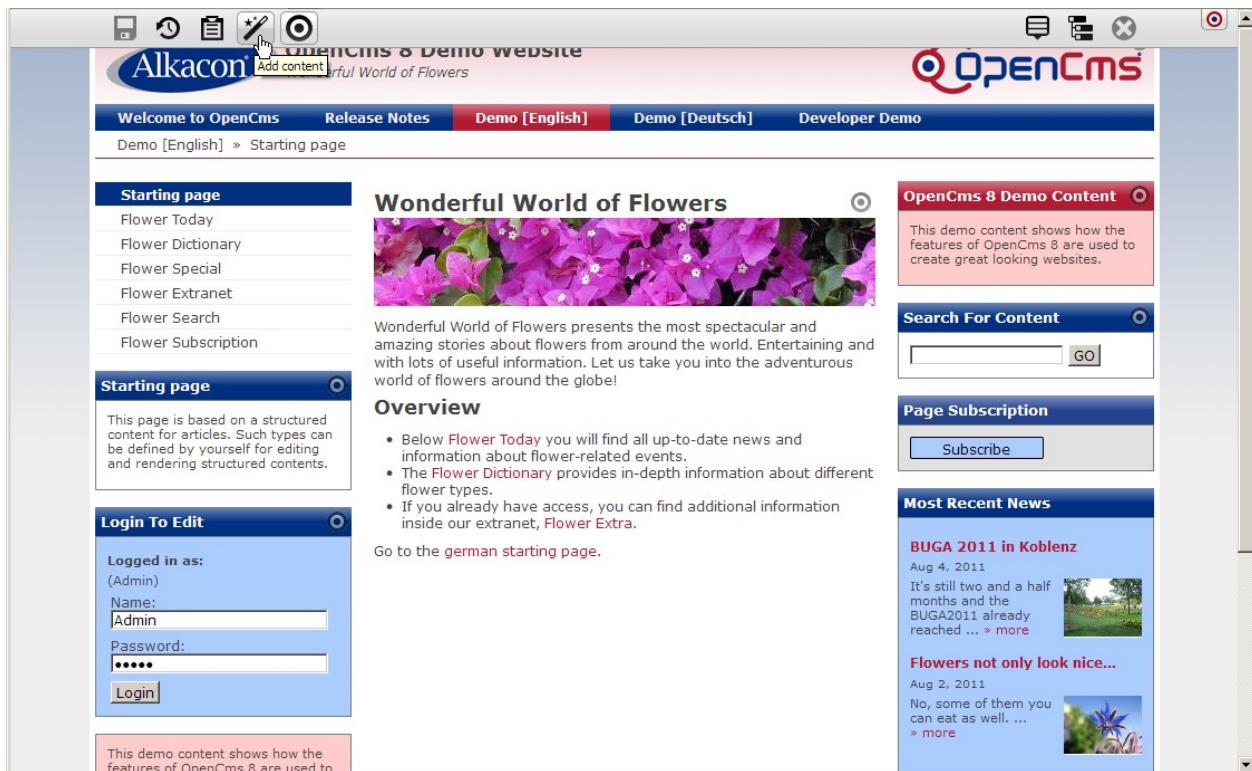


Image 8: Open the "Add Wizard" in the ADE toolbar.

By default the new resource type **Newsletter subscription** is available through the entire site and can be added to pages by Drag & Drop. Just click on the "Move to page" icon and keep the mousebutton pressed. Now you can move the new Newsletter subscription where you need it and release the mouse-button.

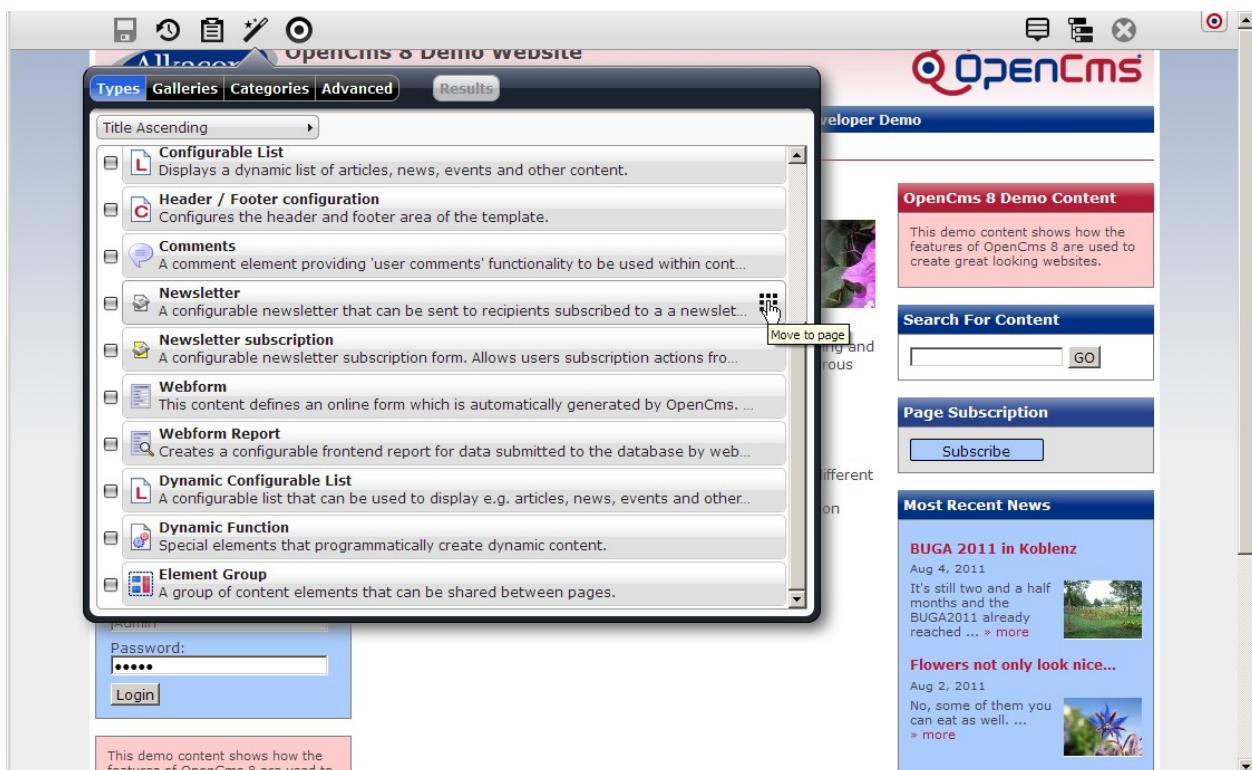


Image 9: Drag a new Newsletter email preview from the "Add Wizard".

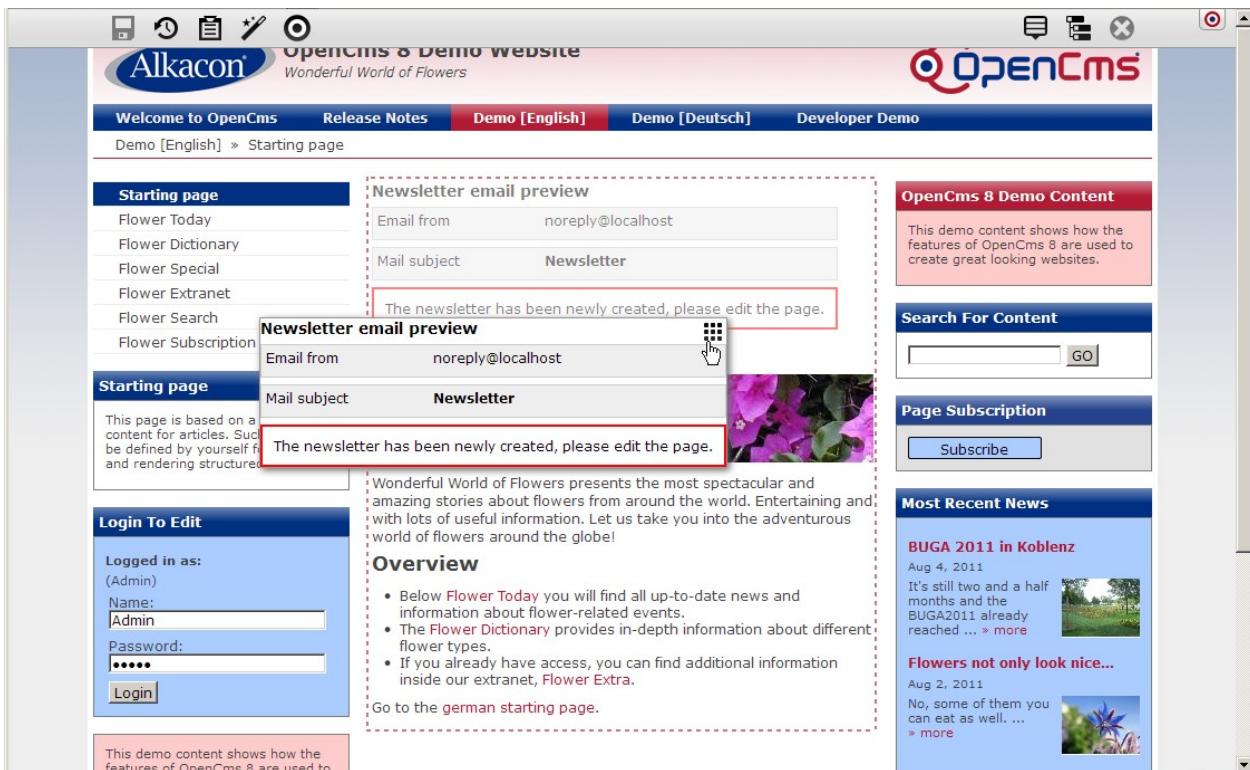


Image 10: Dropping the new Newsletter email preview to destination container.

4.2.5 Editing an OAMP email preview

To edit the newly created OAMP Newsletter subscription click on the ADE icon in the upper right corner of the OAMP Newsletter subscription and select "Edit".

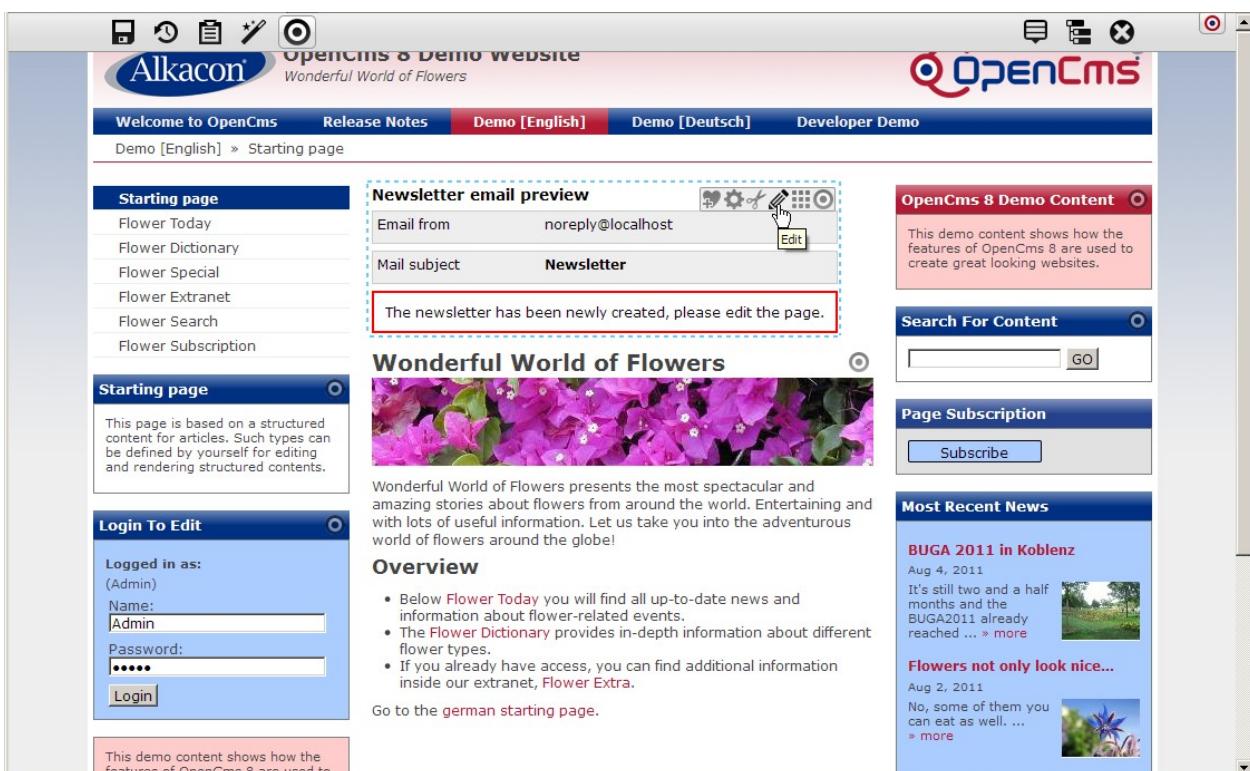


Image 11: Open the ADE Editor.

The following fields are available for editing:

- **Email from:** The email address that is used as sender address for the newsletter mails.
- **Sender name:** The name of the newsletter sender
- **Email BCC:** A BCC recipient for the newsletter mail, can be used to control the newsletter transmission.
- **Mail subject:** The subject of the newsletter mail.
- **Mail text:** The text of the newsletter mail.
- **Mail configuration:**
 - **Html mail:** If checked, an HTML email is generated, otherwise a text only newsletter mail is sent.
 - **Html only:** If checked, the generated HTML mail will not contain an alternative text version of the newsletter mail (necessary for Mozilla Thunderbird).
 - **Mail config:** Optional newsletter mail configuration file that overrides the mail head and foot configuration fields below.
 - **Mail head:** The html for the newsletter mail head, can contain CSS style sheet to format the email text.
 - **Mail foot:** The html for the newsletter mail head, usually closes the html content body.

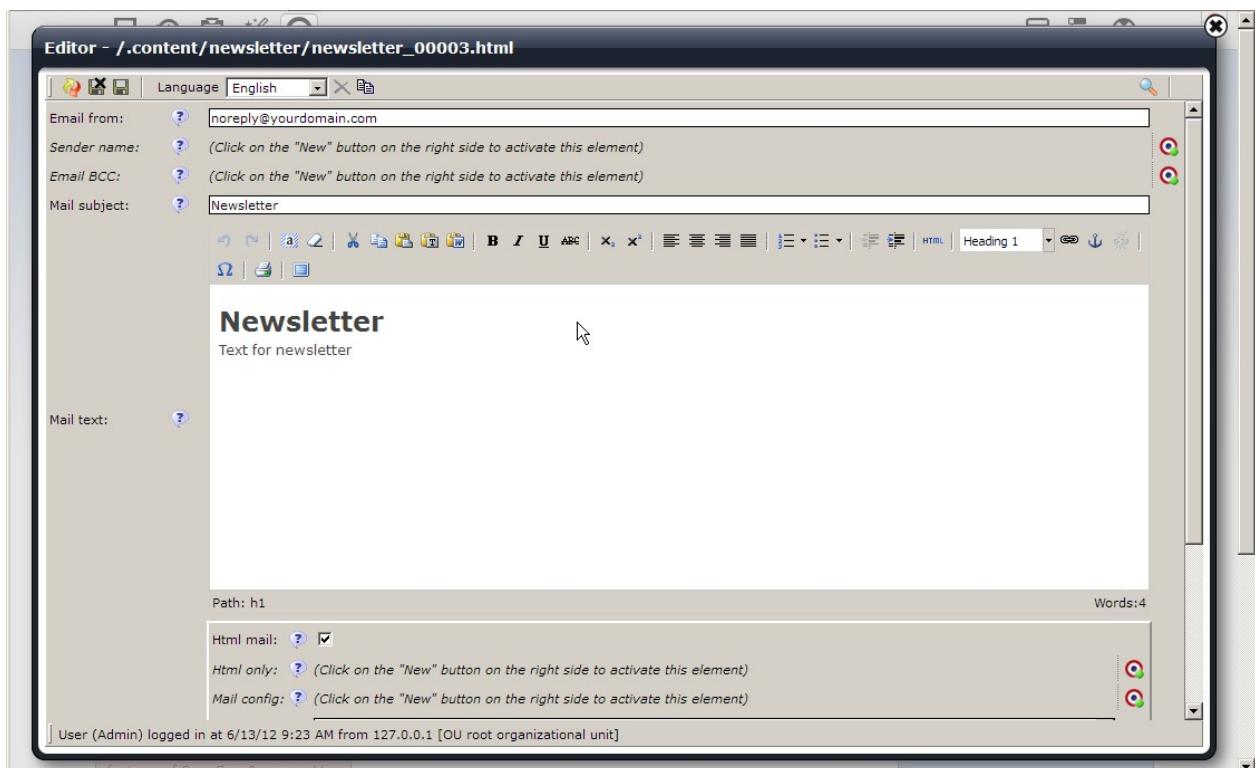


Image 12: Alkacon OAMP Newsletter email preview in ADE Editor.

4.2.6 Adding an existing OAMP Newsletter email preview to your page

You can also select an existing OAMP Newsletter email preview from the "Add Wizard" by double-clicking the Resource type **Newsletter** or by checking the box left to it and clicking "Results". From the displayed results, select the OAMP Newsletter email preview you need and add it to your page by Drag & Drop.

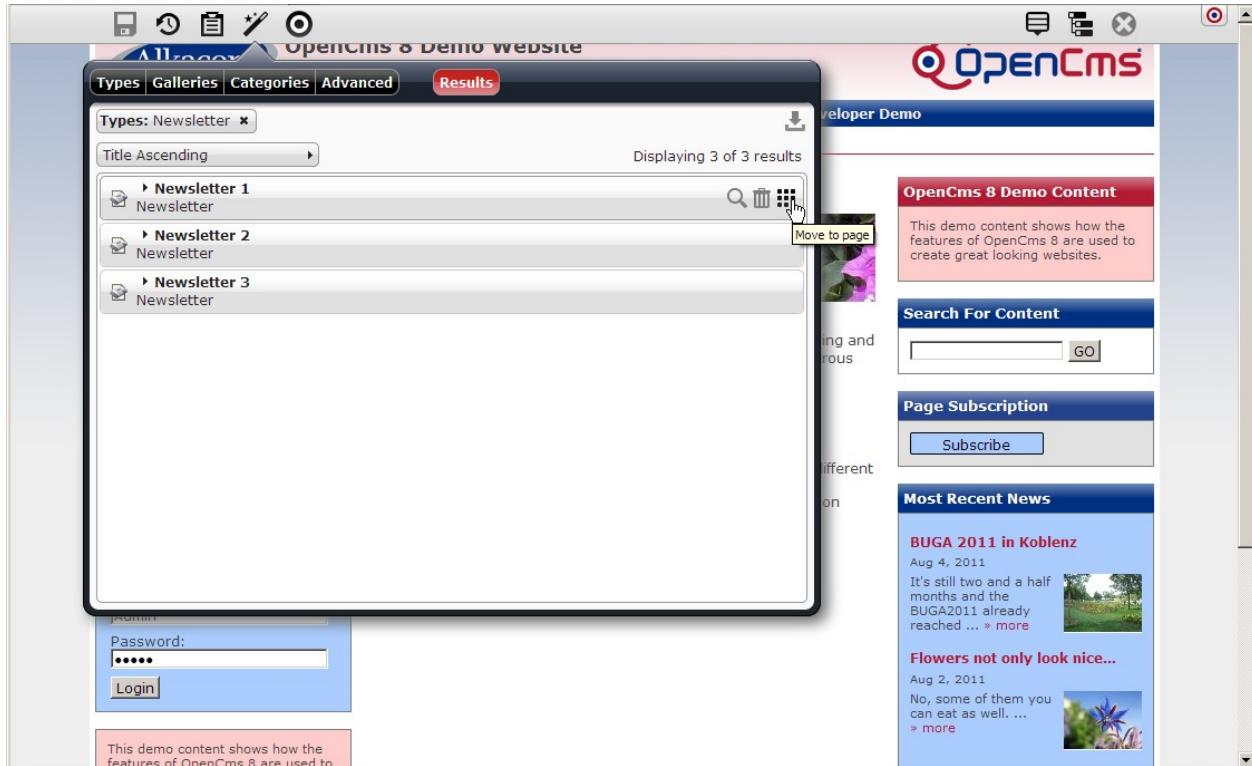


Image 13: Drag & Drop of an existing OAMP Newsletter email preview in ADE.

5 Using the module API

All classes used to generate the front end views, to send the emails and for the subscription/unsubscription functions are part of the package
`com.alkacon.opencms.v8.newsletter`.

It contains the following classes:

- **CmsMailingListSelectionList**: used by the mailing list selection popup dialog called from the mailing list widget
- **CmsMailingListWidget**: generates the mailing list selection widget to be used in the structured XML content editor
- **CmsNewsletterMail**: thread that sends newsletter emails to mailing list subscribers
- **CmsNewsletterManager**: provides methods to manage the subscribers for a mailing list, to get all configured newsletter units for the Administration view and to get the initialized mail data class instance (`I_CmsNewsletterMailData`) to use for sending newsletter emails
- **CmsNewsletterSubscriberCleanupJob**: scheduled job that can be configured in the Scheduled Jobs Management to clean up unconfirmed subscribers
- **CmsNewsletterSubscriptionBean**: JSP bean providing methods for the subscription and unsubscription process
- **CmsNewsletterXmlContentHandler**: special handler that does not replace the unfound macros in default values for structured XML contents

- **I_CmsNewsletterMailData:** interface to generate newsletter emails and the list of email recipients by using a structured XML content
- **A_CmsNewsletterMailData:** abstract implementation of the mail data interface, with some methods already implemented, e.g. generating the list of recipients
- **CmsNewsletterMailData:** simple extension of the abstract mail data implementation, used as default to generate newsletter emails from the structured XML content shipped with the newsletter module
- **Messages:** convenience class to access the localized messages of the newsletter package
- **CmsNewsletterDateResourceComparator:** Comparator for sorting newsletter resource objects based on dates.
- **CmsNewsletterResourceCollector:** A default resource collector that supports flexible sorting based on resource dates.

The classes of the sub package `com.alkacon.opencms.v8.newsletter.admin` are used by the "Newsletter Management" tool in the Administration view of OpenCms and not described in detail.

5.1 Configuring another newsletter content to be used by the module

If the newsletter to send should be of another structured XML content type, a class implementing the interface `I_CmsNewsletterMailData` has to be written. The abstract class `A_CmsNewsletterMailData` can be used and extended for this purpose, it already implements some basic methods of the interface. It also provides methods to access the current user's context (`org.opencms.file.CmsObject`), the currently used XML content resource (`org.opencms.xml.content.CmsXmlContent`) and the mailing list (`org.opencms.file.CmsGroup`) to send the newsletter email to.

The following abstract methods have to be implemented in the mail data class:

- **getEmail():** returns the generated email object with all fields (from, subject, message) set except the email recipients, usually the email contents are generated from the underlying XML content
- **getEmailContentPreview():** returns the email preview String for the preview JSP when clicking on a newsletter resource in the Explorer view of OpenCms
- **getResourceTypeName():** returns the resource type name of the structured XML content resource which is used for generating the newsletter emails

The newsletter XML content resource type can use the following formatter JSP (i.e. specified in the "<formatters>" node of the resource type XSD):

```
/system/modules/com.alkacon.opencms.v8.newsletter/formatters/newsletter-center.jsp
```

Of course you can write your own formatter JSP, too.

The XSD should contain the element nodes `<From>`, `<BCC>` and `<Subject>` in order to make the above mentioned preview JSP work properly.

The following XML nodes can be taken as an example to configure a resource type for a new newsletter XML content resource type in an OpenCms module by editing the OpenCms configuration file `opencms-modules.xml`:

```
<resourcetypes>
  <type class="org.opencms.file.types.CmsResourceTypeXmlContent" name="mynewsletter" id="xyz">
    <properties>
      <property>
```

```

<name>template-elements</name>
<value type="shared"><![CDATA[ /system/modules/com.alkacon.opencms.v8.newsletter/pages/detail-newsletter.jsp]]></value>
</property>
</properties>
<param name="schema">/system/modules/com.my.newsletter/schemas/newsletter_mail.xsd
</param>
</type>
</resources>
<explorertypes>
<explorertype name="mynewsletter" key="fileicon.mynewsletter" icon="mynewsletter.png" reference="xmlcontent">
<newresource page="structurecontent" uri="newresource_xmlcontent.jsp?newresourcetype=mynewsletter" order="66" />
</explorertype>
</explorertypes>

```

Note: Be sure to insert a unique resource type name and a unique resource type id before inserting the nodes in a module configuration and to make a backup of a working configuration file before changing anything.

5.2 Configuring a scheduled job to delete unconfirmed subscribers

To delete unconfirmed subscribers from the system, a scheduled job can be configured.

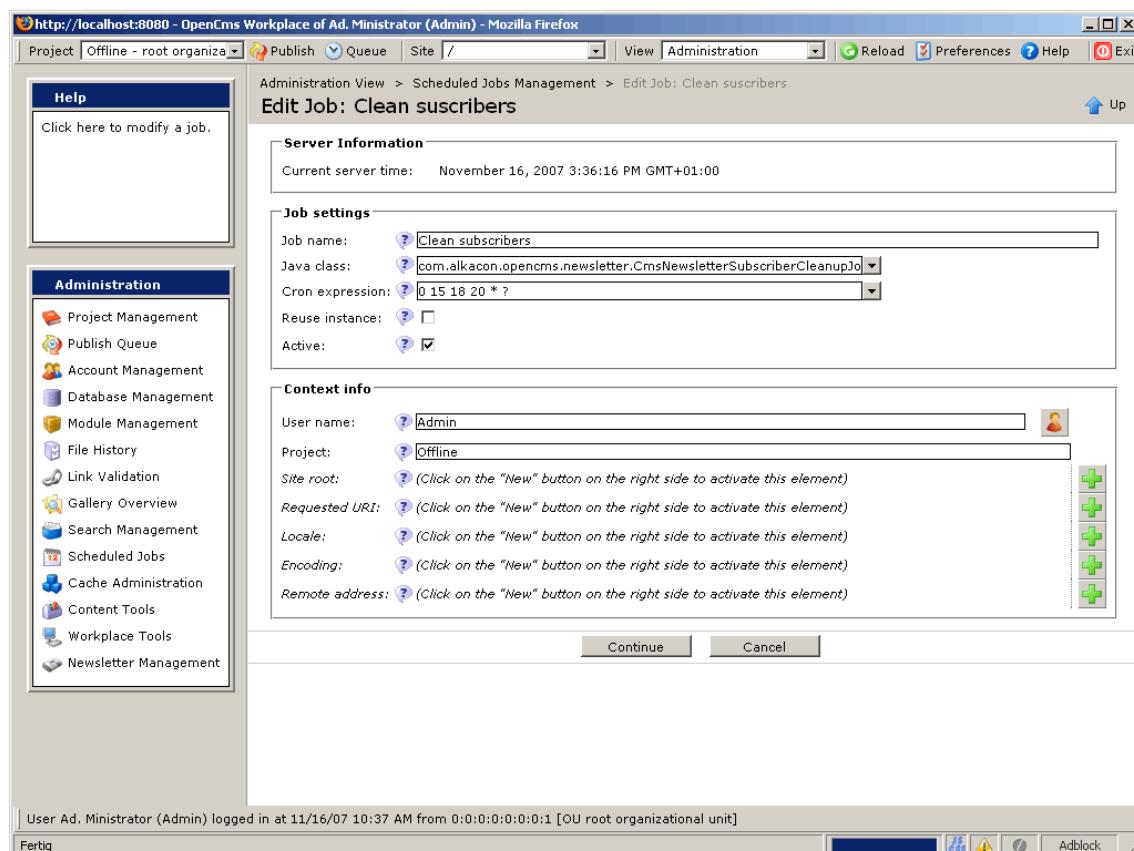


Image 14: Scheduled job configuration

The Java class to use for the scheduled job is

com.alkacon.opencms.v8.newsletter.CmsNewsletterSubscriberCleanupJob. Be sure to run the job in an offline project, otherwise the subscriber deletion will not work properly. The job can be configured with the following parameter:

- **maxage:** specifies the maximum age (in hours) subscribers can be unconfirmed before they are removed from the system

Note: If the parameter is not set, a default value of 168 hours (7 days) is used.