BLOGO

CONQUER THE WEB.

Blogo is open source Lotus Domino-based blogging and CMS software, designed around simplicity, quality and the latest web standards.

powered by s3maphor3.org

BLOGO Manual

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1. Introduction

This manual describes how to install, setup, use and customize Blogo.

1.1 What is s3maphor3?

S3maphor3 is a small software brand founded by Ferdy Christant in 2004. The brand mission is to deliver fun, innovative, open, honest, high quality products and services to the open source community.

A dedicated site for the brand is available at:

http://www.s3maphor3.org/

1.2 What is Blogo?

Blogo is open source weblog software based on the IBM Lotus Notes & Domino platform. It is the first public project of the s3maphor3 brand. Blogo is one of the first fully XHTML-compliant blog engines that also comes with a web based administration section. This manual will explain into detail what the software is capable of.

1.3 Licensing

Although the Blogo software is free, and the source code is available for free as well, there still are some conditions for using it. By using it, you will agree to:

- Have your name published online as a registered user.
- Not make any commercial attempt with the software.
- Not discredit the author of the software in any reasonable way.
- Keep the branded "powered by s3maphor3" logo intact.
- Not distribute copies of this software by anything else but the official s3maphor3 site.

You are not required, but urged to:

- Send your feedback as a user of the software to this author.
- Send possible improvements for the software to this author, so everybody can benefit.
- Share your customisations of the software, where they could be useful to all.
- Keep this author updated about your online activity regarding the use of this software.

You are allowed to:

- Use the software for free without a time limit.
- Alter the software, under the conditions mentioned above.
- Deploy multiple copies, under the conditions mentioned above.
- Use techniques learned from the source code in the software in a commercial setting

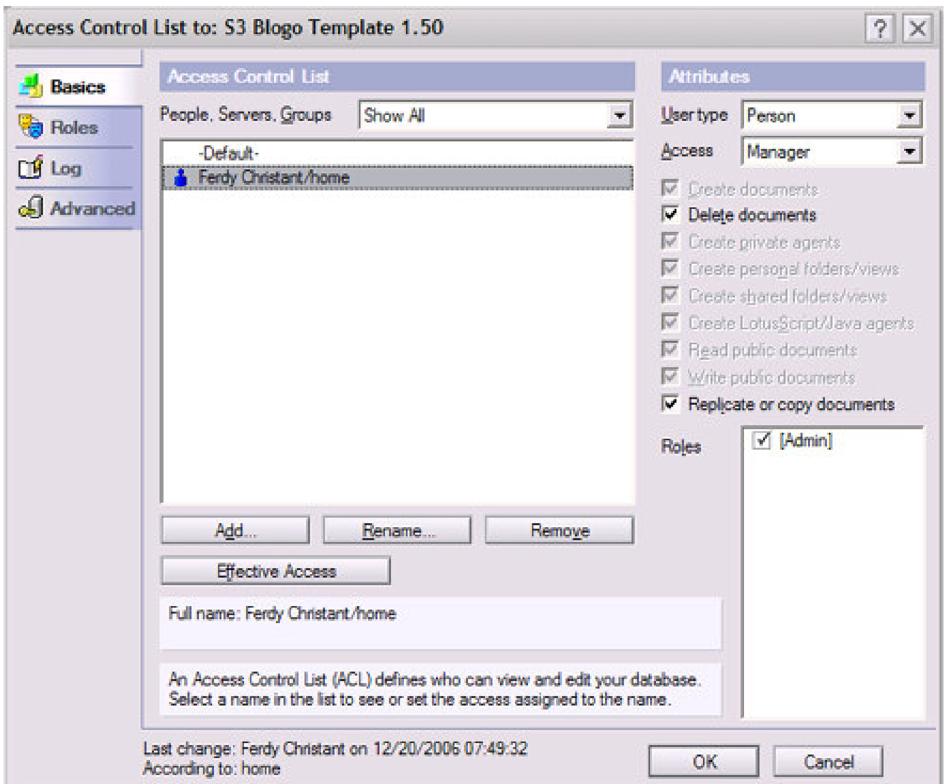
2. Installation & Setup

2.1 Installation

Installing Blogo is straightforward. Follow the instructions below:

Download the latest copy of the blog template.

- Unzip the download package in a directory of your choice.
- Start your Lotus Notes client and open the nsf file you just extracted. Use the File-Database-Open menu.
- Open the Access Control List of the file you added to your workspace and make sure you give yourself a minimum of editor access with the [Admin] role enabled:



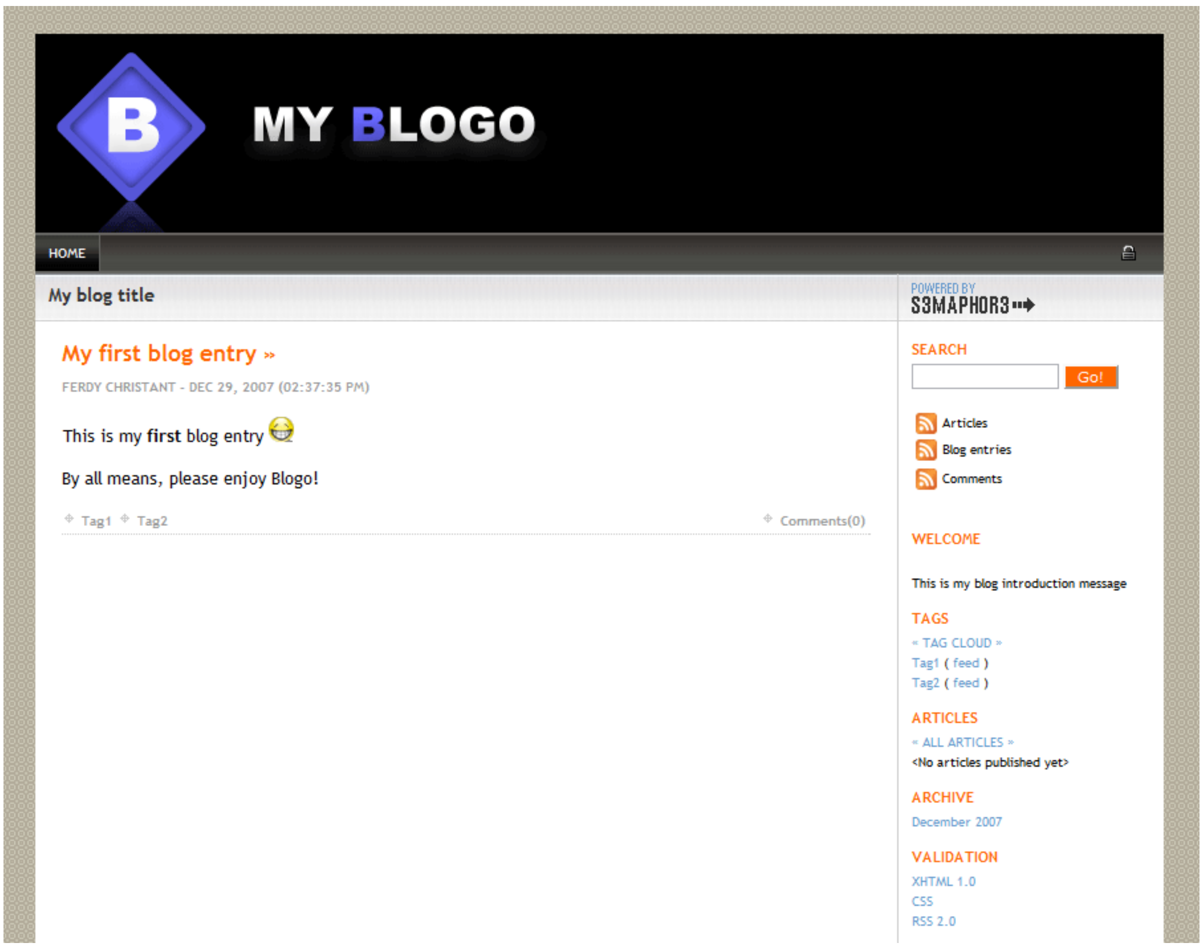
- Deploy the nsf file onto a Notes & Domino 6 server with a user ID that has the [Admin] role enabled. Be sure to copy both the design AND documents when doing this. The blog software needs a few documents to run, and they are included in the template.
- Finish the setup of the Access Control List. Give all blog authors a minimum of Editor Access with delete documents and the [Admin] role enabled. Give anonymous users Author Access with create documents enabled, but delete documents disabled. If you're planning on doing design customizations, you should give those users Designer Access. To manage the Access Control List, you will need Manager Access.
- Let your Administrator sign the database with the correct ID for your environment.
- If you are planning on enabling the search function, you need to full-text-index your database.

2.2 Setup

Now that you have installed the software on the server, it is time to set it up. Like the installation, this is also a fairly simple process. First, open a browser and browse to the nsf file you have deployed on the server like this:

http://yourdomain.com/yourpath/yourblog.nsf

If you managed to set up the Access Control List correctly, you should not have to log in. Something similar to the screen below should appear:



Before personalizing your blog, let's have a brief look at the elements that make up the user interface. The interface has three main elements:

Header

The header consists of two parts, the header graphic and the header menu. The header graphic is an example image provided with the software, you are free to change it. The customizing chapter tells you more about this subject.

The header menu is the horizontal bar containing the Home link. The header links are customisable; this can be done in the application setup screen which we'll cover in a minute. By default, the header menu contains one Home link. At the end of the header menu bar you will find a lock icon, this gives you access to the administration section of the blog.

Content Area

The content area consists of three parts, the content header (containing your blog title or slogan), the content panel (white) and the brand logo. The content header is typically used to inform the user of the type of content they are currently watching in the content panel. It can also be used as a place to put the blog slogan. The application setup screen lets you define this.

The content panel is the most important area on the screen. It is a space to display your content, whether it is a blog entry, page, or article overview.

The brand logo is used to identify the type of software that is used to run your blog. This logo should not be removed when you use the software.

Navigation Panel

The navigation panel is located on the right and is used to navigate throug the entire site, for both readers and blog authors. It consists of a variable number of navigation blocks. Each navigation block can contain text, links, etc. You can enable or disable navigation blocks in the application setup.

Starting the setup

Now that we had a glance at the user interface elements of the screen, let us move on to setting up the application for your use. Click on the little lock icon on the far right of the header menu:

You will be prompted to log on. Use your user name and internet password to log on. When you are authorized, the Administration Panel will open. This will result in both a new content- and navigation panel. In the new navigation panel on the right, click on Setup->Configuration to open the application setup screen:

BLOGS

Manage Blogs
Manage Comments
Manage Blocked IPs
New Blog Entry

PAGES

Manage Pages
New Page Entry

STYLESHEETS

Manage Stylesheets
New Stylesheet Entry

RESOURCES

Manage Resources
New Resource

SETUP

Configuration

The application setup form will open. This is where we will personalize the blog. Let us go through the options that are available:

Blog Options

Here you can set the Blog Title, Description and Topics.

The Blog Title is what will appear on the homepage in the content header bar. This can be used to display a catchy slogan, for instance.

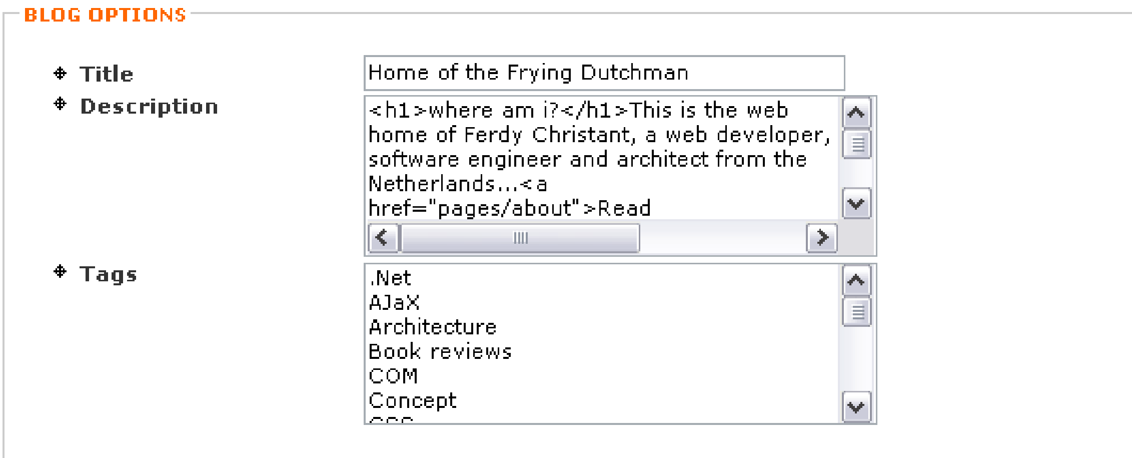
The Description field can be used as a short description to introduce users to your site. This description will be displayed as the first navigation block in the navigation panel, if you enable it in the navigation options. In this description field, you can use any (X)HTML you want. Use h1 tags to create a navigation header. For instance, if you enter this as your site's description:

```
<h1>where am i?</h1>
This is the brand new web home of Ferdy Christant.<br />
<a href="pages/about">Read more >></a>
```

It will result in this:

The Tags field is used to supply a list of topics to store your blog entries in. When you create a new blog entry, you can choose to store it in one or more of the predefined tags from the setup form, or type them in manually. Additionally, the navigation panel will display all your blog entries categorized by tag for easy navigation, in the form of a simple list and a tag cloud. From the navigation panel, users can subscribe to tags in your blog, using the "feed" link. Plus, in the footer of each blog entry, the tags are listed as well.

To fill out the predefined list of tags, simply separate each tag definition with a new line. Here is an example of how the blog options are filled out for my own blog:



And here is an example of a tag cloud, from the author's blog. The tag cloud is the first link in the "tags" navigation block on the homepage:

Navigation Options

In the navigation options section of the application setup screen, you can define navigation items in both the header menu and the navigation panel.

The first option "Include Blocks", allows you to select which navigation blocks you would like to appear in the navigation panel. Simply check which one you would like. Here is a short explanation of what each available navigation block is:

Search

This block enables or disables the search function. Note that you need to index your database to use the search.

Introduction

This block displays a short description of your site, which you have defined in the "Description" field of the blog options.

Archive

This navigation block displays a list of months in which you have posted blog entries. When a user clicks on a month, all blog entries of that month will be opened.

Articles

This navigation block shows a list of latest articles, plus a link to all articles

Topics

This navigation block displays a list of tags for which you have posted blog entries. When a user clicks on a tag, all blog entries for that tag will be displayed. Furthermore, users can subscribe to tags of their interest, as each tag name is succeeded with a feed link.

Validation

This navigation block displays links to validate your mark-up and CSS.

RSS

This navigation block enables the RSS subscription icons for both blog entries and comments.

The second option in the Navigation Options section of the application setup screen is "Header links". Here you can define a map of links, which will result in a header menu of your choice. Let's see how this works by an example.

Example: menu definition

In order to define a simple menu, simply define a list of keywords and enter the URL location behind them between parentheses. Note that you can link to both internal and external URLs:

```
HOME
ABOUT(pages/about)
FAQ(pages/faq)
WISHLIST(http://www.amazon.com/wishlist)
LINKS(pages/links)
CONTACT(pages/contact)
```

In this example, we defined six links that each link to a URL we defined, four of these are internal links to pages we created earlier, one of the links is to an external site and one link has no URL defined ("HOME"). If you do not specify a location after they keyword, the software will assume to link to the homepage.

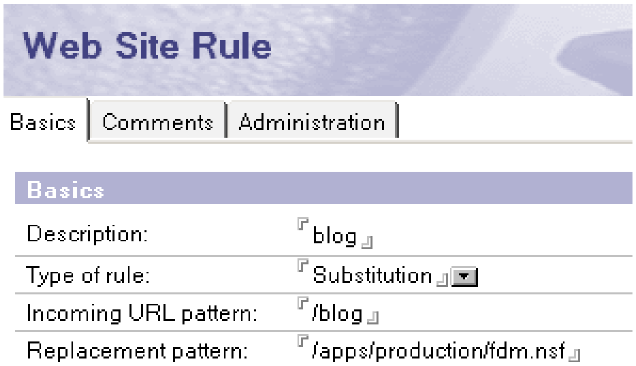
The definition provided in example two will result in this:

Advanced Options

The Advanced Options section of the application setup screen has four options: permanent links, meta tag keywords, header scripts and Google AdSense optimization.

By default, permanent links are disabled. When it is disabled, all the automatically generated links in the software will include the file path on the server to your blog database. When you are publishing on the internet, this can bring you into trouble, for instance when you move the blog file to a new location. Users would lose all their bookmarks.

To overcome this, you can enable permanent links for the blog software by checking the box. This will make sure that your file path is replaced by the word “blog”. Now, since Domino will not find this new “file” on the server, you have to create a substitution rule for your domain by the name of “blog”:



Ask your administrator for help on this. After you have created the substitution rule for your domain, restart the Domino server’s HTTP task to make it active.

Now that you have permanent links enabled your URLs will not only look pretty, they are also independent of where you stored your file. Here is how a link could look like with permanent links enabled:

http://www.ferdychristant.com/blog/articles/DOMV-5ZLPFN

Note: The example link takes you to an article where you can find more information on how permanent links work in Blogo.

The Meta tag keyword(s) field in the application setup screen is optional. You can use it to define keywords that describe your site. This will help search engines in indexing your site. Simply separate every keyword with a new line.

The header scripts option allows you to define HTML or Javascript inside the header tag of all your blog pages. This can be particularly handy when like to include third party services, such as statistics and banners.

You can use Blogo to include Google Ads on your blog. After you have setup a Google AdSense account, you can include the generated javascript code in the header script field described in the previous paragraph. To further optimize the ads, you can enable the field “Google AdSense optimization” in the advanced options. This will make sure that only relevant content on your blog will be used as input by Google to generate context-sensitive ads.

By default, RSS feeds for articles, blog entries and comments are automatically created for you and so is the URL of these feeds. However, the Blogo setup form allows you to override the address of your feeds. This way, you can use 3rd party feed services, such as Feedburner, to manage your RSS subscriptions and statistics. To do this, enter the third party-provided URL of your feeds in the “RSS Feeds” section of the setup form. If you do not use a third party feed manager you should leave these fields blank.

This concludes the overview of options in the application setup screen. Do not forget to save your options if you change them. Your changes will immediately be activated.

3. Blogging

In Blogo, there are a number of different content types, which will all be explained in this chapter:

- Blog entries
- Articles
- Pages
- Stylesheets
- Comments
- Resources

In ways of how you create content, the first three are very similar, yet the difference is in the way they are published. Blog entries are published chronologically, based on their date of posting. Furthermore, comments and or ratings are allowed for a blog entry. This also is the case for articles, yet they are not published chronologically. Articles stand on their own and are not published inline with blog entries. Pages are static and not published inline with blog entries either. Furthermore, comments and/or ratings are not possible for pages.

Comments are typically posted by readers of the blog. They are linked to blog entries. Comments can be enabled/disabled per blog entry or article.

Resources are file attachments which you can use in all your content types, for example to insert images in your blog content.

Stylesheets are CSS pages that control the look & feel of your blog.

3.1 The Blog Form

Let us see the basic options that are available when creating a new blog entry. First, open up the Administration Section by clicking on the lock icon and logging in. This will automatically take you to the overview of available blog entries. In this overview, you can edit or delete existing entries, if any. To create a new blog entry, click on the “New Blog Entry” link in the navigation panel:

The new blog entry form will open. Let’s review the options in the form:

Author

Author is a field that is automatically filled by the user that is logged on. You are allowed to overrule it, for instance to apply a nick name to the blog entry. The contents of the author field will be published under the blog entry title in all the overviews.

Title

This indicates the title of the blog entry. The contents of this field will be published above the blog entry in a large font. Try to come up with a short, but descriptive title.

Description

This field will only appear in the RSS feed of the blog. Try to describe your new blog entry carefully, so RSS users can decide to read the full story online.

Type

In this field you can choose to either create a blog entry or an article. As mentioned earlier, the only difference between the two is how they are published. Articles stand on their own, while blog entries are published chronologically based on their date and time of posting.

Tags

In this field you can define what tag the current blog entry belongs to. You can select more than one tag per blog entry. The list of available tags is looked up from the application setup screen.

Custom tags

In this field you can manually add tags to the current blog entry, in addition to the predefined list of tags in the previous field. You should separate tag entries with a new line.

Note: Both the tags and custom tags fields are used as input for the meta keywords field of your blog. This field will optimize your blog for search engines.

Allow comments

With this field you can either enable or disable user comments for the current blog entry.

Allow ratings

With this field you can either enable or disable user ratings for the current blog entry.

Allow bookmarks

When enabled, users will be able to bookmark this blog entry at one of the popular social bookmarking sites, such as digg.com.

Mark private

With this field you can mark your current blog entry private. If you do, anonymous readers cannot see the blog entry, but you can. This is typically used as a preview function or a way to create blog entries early, but publish them later.

Document content

This is the field that will contain the actual blog entry content. Blogo comes with a convenient rich text editor built-in. This will allow you to craft rich content without coding any HTML. However, if you prefer to hand craft your HTML, the rich text editor pane contains a "html" button that allows you to do just that.

Note that when you want to insert an image from the editor, you will first need to upload it in a Resource document. This will be explained in a minute.

Tip: The last button in the rich text editor button panel switches to full screen. This allows you to conveniently edit large blocks of content.

Saving the blog entry

When you save a blog entry for the first time, you can simply click the Save button to save the entry. When you edit an existing blog entry, there are three ways to save the entry:

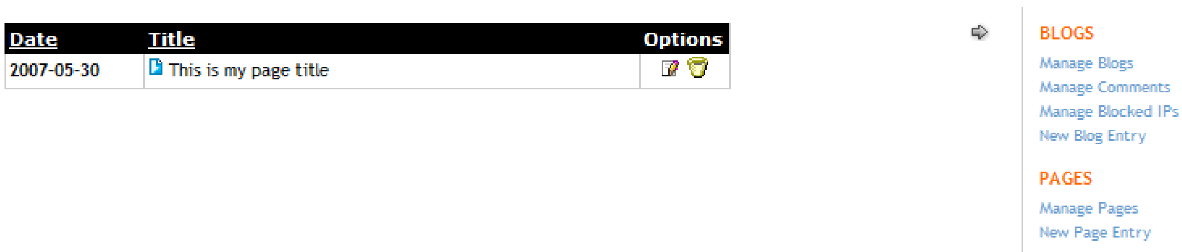
- Save. This will save your updates and keep your publication date equal to the creation date. This is the default behaviour.
- Save with current date. This will save your updates and update your publication date to the current date. This comes in handy when you have saved a draft earlier (using the Mark Private option), yet want to publish it using the current date.
- Save with original date. This will save your updates and reset the publication date to the original creation date of the document. This comes in handy when you have accidentally published a blog entry on the current date.

The publication date of blog entries is important because it determines the order in which blog entries appear on the site.

3.2 Pages

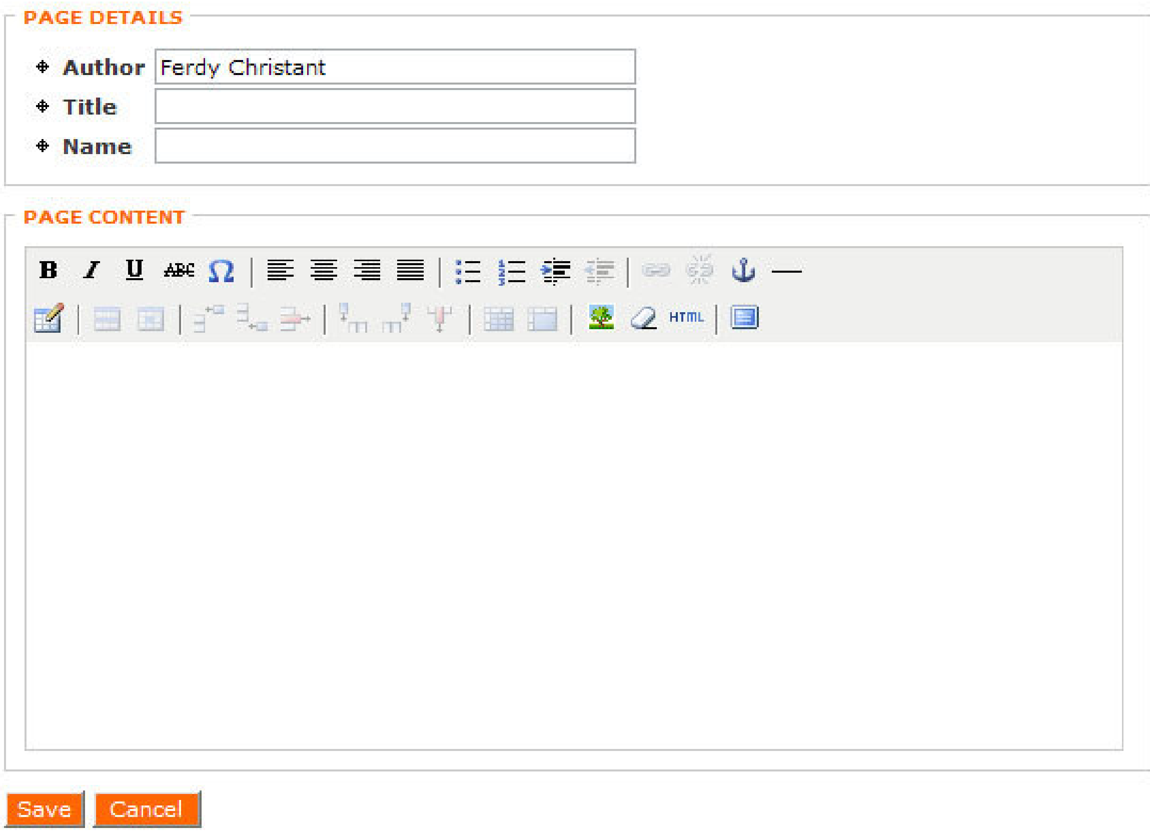
Pages are much like blog entries. They can contain the same rich content explained earlier. They are, however, static. This means that pages are not published on blog overviews, nor are they categorized by topic. The only way to let a user know of the existence of a page is to provide them a link to it in either the header menu definition or in one of your blog entries or articles. For example, you could create an "About" page that describes yourself, and link to it by creating a link in the header menu.

To manage your pages, open the Administration Panel and click on "Manage Pages":



See screenshot. In the page overview you can see the available pages. You can edit or delete existing pages by clicking the links for that behind each entry. Click on the headers to sort the page overview either by date or title.

To create a new page, click on "New Page Entry" in the navigation panel:



See screenshot. Let's go over the fields in the new page form:

Author

This field is filled out automatically if you are logged on, but can be overridden.

Title

The contents of the title field is what will appear as a page title when the user opens the page through a link that you provided

Name

Name is a field that should be used as a short and unique identifier for the page. This field is used when you link to a page. For instance, when you would create a page named "about", the link to this page would be "pages/about". Try to not use any special characters in the name field.

Content

The content field works exactly the same as the one for blog entries. You use the rich text editor or the HTML editor to craft your content.

Tip: The last button in the rich text editor button panel switches to full screen. This allows you to conveniently edit large blocks of content.

3.3 Stylesheets

The software strives for a complete separation between display and content. That's why the look & feel of the blog template is defined in stylesheet pages. You are free to change these stylesheets, yet realize that the CSS is quite complex and you need to be knowledgeable in advanced CSS techniques. The stylesheets available in the blog template are stored as "Stylesheets" (administration panel -> manage Stylesheets):

Date	Title	Options
2004-09-12	$master_main_style.css	
2004-09-12	$master_print_style.css	

$master_style_main.css

This is the main stylesheet file. It controls the basic layout of the different areas in the blog interface.

$master_style_print.css

This stylesheet controls how content looks when it is printed by a user.

3.4 Resources

Resources are file attachments that you can store in documents to refer to later in your content. They are typically used to upload images and office documents in a central place. The file attachments are stored in resource documents that are named. Per resource document, you can upload an unlimited amount of file attachments, three at a time. The maximum file attachment size that can be uploaded is generally controlled in a server setting.

To manage your resources, click on "Manage Resources" in the navigation panel of the administration section:

Title	File(s)	Options
MyResource	emoticon.gif	
$master_graphics	background_button.jpg background_button_bar.jpg background_header.jpg background_page.gif background_spacer.gif emoticon01.gif emoticon02.gif emoticon03.gif emoticon04.gif emoticon05.gif emoticon06.gif emoticon07.gif emoticon08.gif emoticon09.gif	

BLOGS
Manage Blogs
Manage Comments
Manage Blocked IPs
New Blog Entry

PAGES
Manage Pages
New Page Entry

STYLESHEETS
Manage Stylesheets
New Stylesheet Entry

RESOURCES
Manage Resources
New Resource

In the resources overview, you'll see a list of available resource documents. Per resource document, you can choose to edit or delete it. You can open the attachments included in the resource documents directly from this overview by clicking on their link. Note that the software comes with one master image resource document, which contains all images needed to run the software. You can change the images inside, but you should not rename or remove any of them.

To create a new resource document, click on "New Resource" in the navigation panel:

First, select a suitable name for the resource document. Keep it short but unique, this name will be used when you link to a file attachment. The next three fields are used to upload files. Simply click on the "Browse.." button after each field and choose the file to upload. When you're done, click the "Save" button. Next, you will see the attachments you uploaded in a list under the file upload buttons.

Now, you can choose to upload more files, delete files, or close the resource document. To upload more files, just use the file upload fields and save the resource document. To remove files from the resource document, check them from the list under the file upload controls and click "Save". When you are done uploading the files you wanted, click the "Close" button.

To include an uploaded file in your content, there are multiple ways. For images, you can use the image button of the rich text editor, it will launch a popup from where you can select one of the uploaded images. Or, you can manually craft the HTML using the HTML editor:

Regular file:

```
<a href="resources/<resourcename>/$FILE/<filename>Link</a>
```

For example:

```
<a href="resources/R6/$FILE/manual.doc">R6 Manual</a>
```

Image file

```
<img src="resources/<resourcename>/$FILE/<filename" alt="imagedescription" />
```

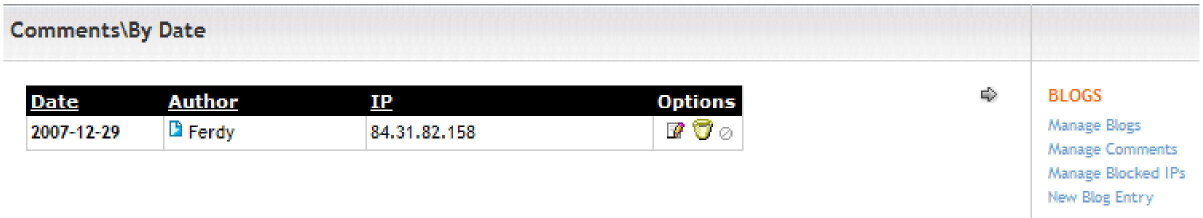
For example:

```
<im src="resources/Safari/$FILE/lion.gif" alt="lion" />
```

IMPORTANT: When you receive the error "File upload not allowed" when uploading a file on the resource form, you should add the line DominoDisableFileUploadChecks=1 to the server's notes.ini

3.5 Comments

The administration section also allows you to manage your comments. This offers and easy way for you to monitor new comments on the blog, delete unwanted comments, correct comments, or block comments. To manage comments, click on the "Manage Comments" link in the navigation panel:

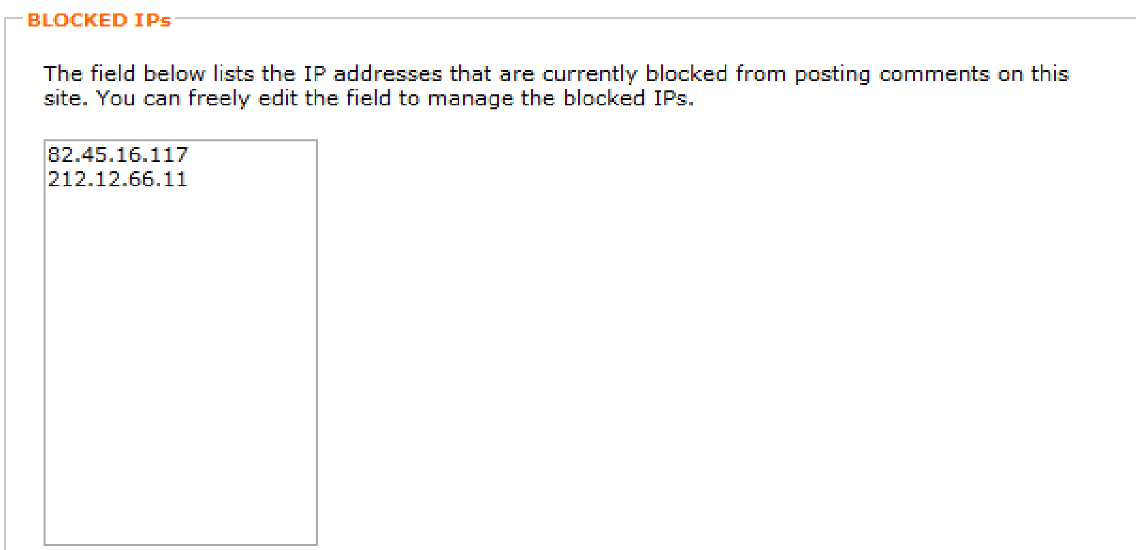


To edit or delete a comment, click on the appropriate link after the comment.

Blogo has built-in protection against comment spam bots. This will block most automated comment attacks. For the spam comments that still get through, there are two ways to manage them:

- Manually delete them, from the "Manage Comments" overview you can click the trash icon to manually delete individual comments.
- Block them, from the "Manage Comments" overview you can click the block icon to block the commenter's IP address from posting comments in the future. After the block action, it is recommended to delete the offending comment.

The IPs addresses that are blocked are maintained in the Block List, which you can maintain from the "Manage Blocked IPs" link in the Administration panel:



3.6 Notes client support

Although Blogo is intended to be operated from the web, it also has basic Notes client support. When opened in the Notes client, basic navigational options are available. These allow you to quickly browse through various content types. Editing content from the Notes client is not supported, however it is convenient to batch copy, move or delete documents.

4. Customization

This chapter explains how to customize certain aspects of the blog template. You are in full control over both the graphics and the stylesheets of the blog, without the need to modify the design of the database. If you still need to alter the code of the application you need to be careful, as a future version may overwrite your change.

4.1 Graphics

All images that are needed to run the blog are in the $master_graphics resource document. You should at no point remove or rename the images in this document as they can potentially break the design of the database. You can, however, change the images to your own needs, as long as you keep their name intact. Be careful in how you do this though, some images expect a certain height or width to look good in the actual software. Just by opening the different images in the resources overview, you should be able to get a good idea of what each image's purpose is.

4.2 Stylesheets

The software strives for a complete separation between display and content. That's why the look & feel of the blog template is defined in stylesheet pages. You are free to change these stylesheets, yet realize that the CSS is quite complex and you need to be knowledgeable in advanced CSS techniques. The stylesheets available in the blog template are stored as pages:

$master_style_main.css

This is the main stylesheet file. It controls the basic layout of the different areas in the blog interface.

$master_style_print.css

This stylesheet controls how content looks when it is printed by a user.