



Barnraisers beacon

The purpose of this document is to act as a guide for the 'beacon' project. Beacon is created and maintained by Barnraiser. Barnraiser is dedicated to giving people the tools they need to share knowledge and further society through social software.

You can find out more about Barnraiser and how to contribute to this project at <http://www.barnraiser.org/>

We aim to constantly improve our documentation. If you see incorrect or unclear documentation please tell us. See the "contributing" section of this document for information on how to tell us.

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beacon

License

Beacon is licensed under the GNU/GPL license. A copy of the license is in the docs directory of the beacon package.

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We selected the above licenses to give you the highest flexibility and freedom in using and customising this software. If you have any questions regarding the legal aspects of this distribution please contact us (see 'contributing' section of this document).

Introducing beacon

Beacon is a very simple date and category driven web site publishing system. It looks like a Blog, but behaves like a Wiki.

Beacon features:

- Wiki article formatting and linking
- Hierarchical categorisation of articles
- Customisable menus
- File upload and inclusion in article content
- RSSfeed
- Article commenting
- Open or restricted editing
- Templated design
- Captcha security
- Database abstraction layer (works with many types of database)
- Multilingual (content and interface)
- Spell checking
- Search
- Newsletter

Beacon has a wide variety of possible uses. It is ideal for individuals or small groups of people that wish to collaborate around a goal such as creating a diary of a club or writing a manual or book.

Before you start with beacon it is worth taking some time out to figure out what you want to achieve. We've attached a "beacon preparation guide" at the back of this document which can be used to guide you through this process.

Terminology

We list some of the Internet and technical words we use here as a buzzword guide.

Wiki

The Hawaiian term "wiki wiki", meaning "quick" or "informal". A wiki is a piece of server software that allows users to freely create and edit Web page content using any Web browser. Wiki supports hyperlinks and has a simple text syntax for creating new pages and cross links between internal pages on the fly.

When you make a page you can add a link by simply typing in Studly caps formatted words (join them together and make each first character upper-case LikeTheseWords). The wiki then displays the page with a question mark at the end of the word (LikeTheseWords?). If you press the "?" you will make a new page. This is the principle of "wiki linking" - it gives you a highly flexible and "quick" environment in which to collaborate around content creation.

RSS

RSS(Really Simple Syndication) is a format for syndicating articles from beacon to other web sites or news aggregators.

Email applications such as Mozilla's Thunderbird allow people to read about news articles on your site within their email environment making it easy for them to keep up to date with your sites articles.

Captcha

'captcha' (Completely Automated Public Turing to tell Computers from Humans Apart) is a system to provide practical security for you as humans can read distorted text but current computer programs can't. Put simply it stops nasty machines from adding adverts and such like to your articles.

Blog

Blog is short for weblog. A weblog is a journal that is frequently updated and intended for general public consumption. Blogs generally represent the personality of the author or the Web site.

Articles, pages and items

An "article" is a page or item that appears in beacon. These can often be referred to as "category pages" (pages that are linked to a category) or "wiki pages" (pages that are linked from a Wiki link) – they are all articles.

Prerequisites

Please check you have a PHP4.x version installed. We have not tested on PHP5.x yet. You are welcome to try. GDLib 2.x needs to be installed.

Spell checking

When you edit your site content you can check you spelling directly with beacons build in spell checking. You can enable spell checking support if your server supports Aspell.

To Install Aspell follow the instructions at <http://aspell.sourceforge.net/> [Windows users please not the link 'Windows port' on the page. Follow that and install the 'Full installer']. After you have installed please follow the link to 'Dictionaries' and install the dictionaries you require.

Database

The standard SQL statements we supply create InnoDB, a MySQL transaction-safe storage engine. It has been designed for maximum performance when processing large data volumes. Its CPU efficiency is probably not matched by any other disk-based relational database engine. It has been proven to handle an average load of 800 inserts/updates per second. You may wish to change this prior to installation by editing the `/install/beacon.sql` file.

Hint: If you do not have MySQL edit `beacon.sql` and remove any instance of "TYPE=InnoDB".

For more information: <http://dev.mysql.com/doc/mysql/en/innodb-overview.html>

Character sets

Unicode provides a unique number for every character, no matter what the platform, no matter what the program, no matter what the language. The Unicode Standard has been adopted by such industry leaders including Apple, HP, IBM, Microsoft, Oracle, SAP, Sun, Sybase and Unisys. Unicode is required by modern standards such as XML, Java, ECMAScript (JavaScript), LDAP, CORBA 3.0, WML, etc., and is the official way to implement ISO/IEC 10646. It is supported in many operating systems, all modern browsers, and many other products.

Unicode enables a single software product or a single website to be targeted across multiple platforms, languages and countries without re-engineering and allows data to be transported through many different systems without corruption.

We have adopted UNICODE for beacon. In `/install/beacon.sql` we create our database tables using "CHARACTER SET utf8". We recommend that you use this.

For more information:

<http://www.unicode.org/>

<http://dev.mysql.com/doc/mysql/en/charset-unicode.html>

Hint: If you database does not support UNICODE remove any instance of "CHARACTER SET utf8" from `beacon.sql`

Who should install

This is a web product and should be installed by a web site systems administrator (webmaster). An understanding of FTP, changing directory privileges and web server installations is required. We may not be able to support you if you are not able to understand these things.

Installation and setup

Please read the terms of the license prior to install. 3rd party classes are included for ease. Please note, these are under separate license.

Express installation and setup

1. Use the included `install/beacon.sql` file to populate a database.
2. Edit the `/config/config.inc.php` with your server and database connection variables. Add in today's date against the `$c_node['release']['install_date']` variable.

3. [optional] If you require spell checking and you have Aspell installed update the `$c_node['node']` `['language']['aspell']['command']` variable to include the path to you Aspell installation. Standard aspell installs are:

```
WINDOWS      "C:\Program Files\Aspell\bin\aspell.exe"  
GNU/Linux   "/usr/local/bin/aspell"
```

4. Edit the `.htaccess` file and replace the 404 error URL with your own.

Setup

1. Register yourself.
2. Add permission to your user in the db - We assume that you are the first person to register, therefore you are `user_id` 1 (row 1 in the users table).
3. Run the following queries on you database:

```
INSERT INTO beacon_permission ( `user_id` , `permission_id` ) VALUES (1,1);  
INSERT INTO beacon_permission ( `user_id` , `permission_id` ) VALUES (1,2);  
INSERT INTO beacon_permission ( `user_id` , `permission_id` ) VALUES (1,3);  
INSERT INTO beacon_permission ( `user_id` , `permission_id` ) VALUES (1,4);  
INSERT INTO beacon_permission ( `user_id` , `permission_id` ) VALUES (1,5);  
INSERT INTO beacon_permission ( `user_id` , `permission_id` ) VALUES (1,6);
```

4. Log off and log in again. You will see the administration menus.
5. Start playing.

Full installation and setup

Please read the terms of the license prior to install. 3rd party classes are included for ease. Please note, these are under separate license.

1. Are you planning to install more than one instance of beacon under your web account? If so you will need to adjust the database table prefix for the table name to create unique table sets. To do this edit the `beacon.sql` file. Change "beacon_" to a unique prefix such as "beacon1_".
2. Use the included `install/beacon.sql` file to populate a database (you will need to manually create a new database first).
3. Edit the `/config/config.inc.php` with your server and database connection variables. If you have changed the table prefix then update the database prefix variable to reflect your changes.
4. [optional] If you require spell checking and you have Aspell installed update the `$c_node['node']` `['language']['aspell']['command']` variable to include the path to you Aspell installation. Standard Aspell installs are:

```
WINDOWS      "C:\Program Files\Aspell\bin\aspell.exe"  
GNU/Linux   "/usr/local/bin/aspell"
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INSERT INTO beacon_permission ( `user_id` , `permission_id` ) VALUES (1,3);  
INSERT INTO beacon_permission ( `user_id` , `permission_id` ) VALUES (1,4);  
INSERT INTO beacon_permission ( `user_id` , `permission_id` ) VALUES (1,5);
```

```
INSERT INTO beacon_permission ( `user_id`, `permission_id`) VALUES(1,6);
```

5. Log off and log in again. You will see the administration menus.
6. Start playing.

Pre launch configuration

Some configuration is advised before you consider launching beacon:

1. In language/en_common.lang.php search for "support@your_domain.com" and replace this with an email address that you wish to use for support.
2. In language/en_common.lang.php search for "METADATA". Under this section add some keywords for search engines – example "gardening, tulips, flower". Add a short description of your site and add in the publication date.
3. Open the files in language/texts/. These files are sent out as emails. You may wish to customise them to reflect your brand.
4. Create an item with a Wiki page name of "SitePolicy" which should contain all legal obligations and guidelines for visitors and contributors. Barnraiser will include an example of this in this guide as soon as a legal team offer to work with us towards creating a "standard" policy document.
5. Consider writing to Barnraiser (info@barnraiser.org) and telling us about what you aim to do with your installation of beacon:)

Common errors

No GD LIB Installed (Windows only)

You will need GDLib support active for uploading images. Php4.3.x and up has this built in, but not activated:

Now you should have a file named php.ini.dist (for this document we will assume it to be in in this path "c:\php\"). Rename that to php.ini and copy it to the root of you Windows directory, C:/WINDOWS/ (be sure to back up the one that is there).

change:

```
extension_dir = ":/"
```

to:

```
extension_dir= " C:\php\extensions"
```

uncomment to extension:

change:

```
;extension=php_gd2.dll
```

to:

```
extension=php_gd2.dll
```

You must restart to see the changes take effect.

Session Errors (Windows only)

You will need to set up a session save path in php.ini. Edit php.ini:

change

```
session.save_path = "/tmp"
```

to:

```
session.save_path = "C:\tmp\"
```

(C:\tmp\ used as example - you can change the directory path to suit you)

Beacon user guide

Beacon is designed to be very easy to use. You can simply write articles, categorise them and you can customise menus to help people navigate to those articles. This guide will take you through the process of setting up your categories, writing some example articles and customising a menu to point to those articles.

You become a contributor by registering with this installation of beacon. If you installed it yourself you will have automatically been granted permissions to access all aspects of your installation. If you are not, you may or may not have permissions to access the edit menus, pages, categories and contributors administration sections of this installation.

My account

When you log in you will see an “account” button at the top of the page. You can change your password, name and preferred language there.

Categories

Beacon includes hierarchical categorisation. When you publish an article you can publish it to a category thus “grouping” your articles around themes or topics.

You can create hierarchical structures to your categories such as:

Personal

 CV

 Biography

Interests

 Gardening

 Technical

 PHP

 Java

 Cycling

You can file an article under any category or sub category.

Adding and editing categories

Press the “edit categories” button.

Press “add top level category”.

Type in your category name and press “insert”

You will now see your category item appear on the left. You can click on it to edit it or you can click the “+” to the left of it to add a category item directly under it.

Articles

An article is a “page” or “item”. You can either add a new article or edit an existing one. You will need permission to add/edit an article. See the “contributors and permissions” section of this guide for further information.

You should read the site rules (site policy) before adding a comment to review the licensing this beacon installation has regarding your work.

Adding an article

Press the “edit articles” button in the administration menu. You will see a list of articles. At the top you will see an “add article” button. Press that to add an article. See “Editing an article” for further information.

Editing an article

There is an edit button under each item. Pressing it will either take you to the edit article page or to the login page if you are not logged in.

In the edit article page you will see a series of fields which should be filled:

Article details

Type in your item details. Included is a small formatting menu. See “formatting an article” for more information on the menu and the formatting options available to you in beacon.

Edit article: Title field

The page title will appear above each page. Enter a concise page title.

Edit article: article synopsis field

The synopsis is a short description of the article. It will appear on listings such as the search results page.

Edit article: language list

If you have a multilingual installation of beacon you will see a list of available languages. Select the language that best represents your article.

Edit article: allow comments checkbox

Readers of your page can comment on your work. Check this box if you want comments to be entered against your work. We recommend that you read the “comments” section before checking this box.

Edit article: default page checkbox

The default page is the page which is displayed by default on the home page (when you first come to the site, it's the first page you see). Check the box to make this the default page.

Edit article: wiki page field

The Wiki page is the page name that you can link to from within any page in beacon. It must be formatted in Studly caps which LooksLikeThis.

Edit article: category list

Select a category from the list.

Saving an article

You can save your page or 'save and go' (which will save the page and take you to the visitor display of the article).

Formatting an article

You can format articles using the wiki formatting tools or by typing in the following syntax:

Bold

You can make any text **bold** by putting three apostrophe's before and after the word(s) like:

```
''' words to bold '''
```

Code

For technical manuals you may wish to write code examples by enclosing the code in `< code >a code tag </code>`. You can also specify at "type" as either "php" or "html".

```
<code type="php">
// comment
$variable = 'Hello world!';
echo($variable);
</code>
```

Heading

How big you want your heading text. Just put a plus sign (+) in front of the text.

```
+ Heading Level 1
++ Heading Level 2
+++ Heading Level 3
++++ Heading Level 4
+++++ Heading Level 5
++++++ Heading Level 6
```

Horizontal rule

On a line by itself at the beginning of the line put ---- to create a horizontal rule:

```
----
```

Break

You may want to create an explicit line break (force a line break). You can use it in lists, tables, etc. to break lines without breaking the element. Any line ending with a space and an underscore will create a break.

```
The quick brown _
foxs jumps over
the lazy dog.
```

Blockquote

any line starting with one or more > signs, followed by a space will create a blockquote:

> one > is one tab in (blockquote)
>> two>> is two tab in (blockquotes)

Lists

Use this to create ordered lists with a # character, or unordered lists with a * marker. Adding spaces before the marking indents the list items. You can mix ordered and unordered lists. If you put a blank line between list item lines, you will start a new list.

```
# one
# two

* three
* four
```

Table

|| at the beginning of a line, with || to separate cells, and || at the end of the line, with optional alignment character (< for left, = for center, > for right).

```
|| Cell 1 || Cell 2 ||
|| Cell 3 || Cell 4 ||
```

You can span cells by using more than one set of || markers.

```
|| Cell 1 || Cell 2 ||
||| Cell span ||
```

You can align the contents of a cell by including a <, =, or > character after the || marker.

```
||< left ||= center ||> right ||
|| The quick brown || fox jumps over || the lazy dog. ||
```

If you include a blank line between table lines, you will start a new table.

```
|| cell 1 || cell 2 ||

|| cell 3 || cell 4 ||
```

Image

You can place an image in your document. You may optionally link to another page in the wiki, and you may optionally indicate HTML attributes for your image, such as 'align' and 'hspace'. There can be no spaces in the image file name, and the macro arguments must be of the form 'arg="value"'.

Look in you profile images (for your scrapbook) or your group images (for the library) and see the filename of your image:

```
[[image yourfile.jpg]]
```

[[image yourfile.jpg align="left" hspace="8"]]

You can make the image a link to a page in the wiki by adding a link="..." argument:

[[image yourfile.jpg link="FormatingFields"]]

You can put a picture in a page by typing the URL to the picture (it must end in gif, jpg, or png).

<http://www.yourdomain.com/asset/yourfile.jpg>

You can use the described-reference URL markup to give the image an ALT tag. You should do this as it helps people with visual disabilities. It also means that when you roll over the image with your mouse you see the ALT tag:

[<http://www.yourdomain.com/asset/yourfile.jpg> my file]

Table of contents

Looks through all the heading elements in the source text and creates a table of contents from them; each table of contents entry is linked to the appropriate heading, so you can click on it to go to the heading.

[[toc]]

Centre

Any line starting with an = sign followed by a space will centre a paragraph line:

= This line is centred.

Raw

Use this when you want to mark text that should not be processed by the remaining Wiki rules (i.e., it should be displayed literally as it is).

****I'm strong!****

Links

You can make a link by simply typing some words together (called smashing words together) with a CAPS at the start of each word !LikeTheseWords. For instance this page name is called FormatingFields.

If you want to create a new page in the !ThenTypeSomethingNew and you will see a questionmark appear after it like !ThenTypeSomethingNew[?]. This means that the page has not been created yet, however if you then click on the link the page will be created and you can type information into it.

If you do not want the text to create a link up an exclamation mark in front of it:

!ThenTypeSomethingNew

You can create a "described" or "labeled" link to a wiki page by putting the page name in brackets,

followed by some text.

[FormattingFields This is a link to this page]

Uniform resource locators (urls)

Create a remote link by simply typing in it's url: <http://www.barnraiser.org/> .

Remember to include the whole url including the http: segment. You do not need to put the trailing slash, however it is good policy to do so.

If you like, enclose it in brackets to create a numbered reference and avoid cluttering the page; [<http://www.barnraiser.org/>].

Or you can have a described-reference instead of a numbered reference:

[<http://www.barnraiser.org/> Barnraiser is super cool]

Textcolour

You can color text like this:

`##aqua`|This is aqua text, `##` but this is not.
`##black`|This is black text, `##` but this is default browser text colour.
`##blue`|This is blue text, `##` but this is not.
`##fuchsia`|This is fuchsia text, `##` but this is not.
`##gray`|This is gray text, `##` but this is not.
`##green`|This is green text, `##` but this is not.
`##lime`|This is lime text, `##` but this is not.
`##maroon`|This is maroon text, `##` but this is not.
`##olive`|This is olive text, `##` but this is not.
`##purple`|This is purple text, `##` but this is not.
`##red`|This is red text, `##` but this is not.
`##silver`|This is silver text, `##` but this is not.
`##teal`|This is teal text, `##` but this is not.
`##yellow`|This is yellow text, `##` but this is not.

If you are familiar with hex code you can also use those:

More text, and then `##ff9933`|this is kind of orange.`##`

Teletype text

To create teletype (monospace) text:

This is `{{teletype}}` text.

Italic text

To create italic text:

This is "italic" text.

beacon lists

In the wiki you can make lists including:

History, a list of the history of this article – shows previous and newer versions of this article.

Similar: lists other articles under this category

Contents: lists newest version of every article

Latest: last edited articles

```
[[Beaconlist limit="10" type="history"]]
```

beacon files

In the wiki you can add files that you have uploaded together with or without an thumbnail image.

```
[[Beaconfile example.pdf thumb="1" align="right"]]
```

Menus

You can create and display menus anywhere in the beacon templates (see customisation). Two menus are supplied as standard; the side menu which appears on the left and the bottom menu which appears under the article.

You can create three types of menu item:

- Category menu items
These menu items links to the newest article under a category. This would be ideally suited to say a blog where you want the newest blog item to appear by default.
- Wiki page menu items
This will link to the newest version of a wiki page.
- External links
You can link to any web address outside of your beacon installation by using an external address. These should be formatted to start with "http://". For example an external link would be formatted as "http://www.barnraiser.org/beacon/".

Contributors and permissions

Visitors to your site whom register become "contributors". After registration they can leave comments where authors permit commenting. You can give contributors additional permissions to edit pages, categories, menus, files or other contributors.

Contributor add themselves by registering with your installation of beacon. You need permission to edit a contributor.

Editing a contributor

Press the "edit contributor" button in the administration menu. You will see a list of contributors. The number to the left of the contributors name is their unique id number. Press that to edit a contributors details.

You cannot change their details (see "my account" section of this guide for more information). You will be able to reset their password in future versions of beacon.

Permissions

Each contributor has assigned permissions. These permissions allow or deny access to a part of the administration screens. You can assign a contributor permissions by checking the appropriate permissions checkboxes and pressing "update".

Note: Do not un-check the "edit contributors" checkbox under your own name otherwise you will stop yourself having access to this administration area. If you do this by accident return to the set up section of this manual and re-enter the permissions SQL statements supplied to return permissions to you.

Files

You need permission to add/edit a file. See the "contributors" section of this guide for further information.

As standard you can upload the following file types to your installation of beacon:

JPG: Joint Photographic Experts Group

A standardized image compression mechanism designed for compressing either full-colour or grayscale photographic images, often for use on the Web. JPG is "lossy," meaning that the decompressed image is not quite of the same quality as the original image.

GIF: Graphics Interchange Format

Format is a commonly used graphics file format for image files on the Internet. We recommend that you use PNG format which has superseded GIF.

PNG: Portable Network Graphics bitmap

Designed to be a patent-free successor to the GIF format. Though not designed specifically for the Web, PNG offers particular benefits in this environment such as improved image compression (10 to 30 percent smaller than GIFs), two dimensional interlacing, storage of text with the an image making it possible for search engines to gather information and offer subject searching for images in a standard way.

TXT: ASCII text file

File extension that is associated with digital documents created as "text only". Text only documents have no formatting saved with them (ie, no tabs, centring, etc.), but preserve all ASCII-based characters.

PDF: Portable Document Format

A file format that has captured all the elements of a printed document as an electronic image that you can view, navigate, print, or forward to someone else. PDFs can be read by any computer without platform conflicts.

You can change or add standard file types. See the “configuration: MIME types” section of this guide for more information.

Adding a file

Press the “edit files” button in the administration menu. You will see a list of files and an “add file” section. Press the “browse” button and navigate to and select the file you wish to upload. Press the upload button to add the file.

Editing a file

Press the “edit files” button in the administration menu. You will see a list of files. Click the thumbnail image of the file you wish to update. To update the file press the “browse” button and navigate to and select the file you wish to upload. Press the upload button to update the file. To delete the file press the “delete” button.

Note: any file that you have used in a page will appear as a broken link (no file) after you delete it. Check that you are not using the file first by searching on the file name.

and an “add file” section. Press the “browse” button and navigate to and select the file you wish to upload. Press the upload button to add the file.

Comments

Comments are short pieces of text that contributors can leave against a pages content.

Adding a comment

If the page author has requested comments you will see a comment box at the base of the page. Beacon only allows registered visitors to comment. There are two reasons for this:

1. Stopping SPAM comments

Nasty people make robots that trawl the web looking for ways to add spam (like adverts to porn sites) to your site. By asking for a contributor to log in first we avoid these and ensure that comments come from human contributors only.

2. The feedback process

The author or another contributor may wish to contact the comment author. If you comment author has allowed their email address to be show people can easily contact the author for further information.

You should read the site rules (site policy) before adding a comment to review the licensing this beacon installation has regarding your work.

You **MUST** observe the site rules (site policy) when adding comments. If you cannot find such rules then the following should act as a guideline.

1. Do not be defamatory to anyone in anyway.
2. Do not mock or denigrate other contributors beliefs (such as religious beliefs).
3. Done not assume you know what someone else believes or thinks. Ask them before jumping to conclusions.
4. Be friendly and polite. It's not hard. Everyone can do it.
5. It you are angry by what you read DO NOT comment. Calm down, think and only then consider commenting.
6. Once you've said it you've said it. If you regret what you say then you should apologise. Even begging an administrator to remove a comment won't work. Once you've hit the “add” button your comment is live

for life. Think before you comment.

Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Requesting comments

As a page author you can invite other contributors to comment against their work. This has many advantages. People CAN contribute to your work and you can learn from their contributions. You can work with them to ensure that the page is up to date and accurate. You can also find people who have similar interests to you leading to collaborative work.

There is a down side to all this. Freedom of speech works both ways. By allowing comments against your work you could attract criticism against your work. You have to accept that this WILL happen.

Newsletter

If you want to place the contributors name in the body of the message simply type USERNAME (in upper-case) into the message body and beacon will replace this text with the name of the contributor.

RSS

Beacon provides visitors with a way to get a feed from this installation of beacon containing a list of pages in date order. It allows people to keep up to date with your site without having to remember to visit your web page.

Email applications such as Mozilla's Thunderbird allow people to read RSS feeds. Consult the documentation of your RSS reader for more information about how to add a feed. The feed can be obtained by pressing the "XML" button at the base of your beacon installation pages.

As a beacon site administrator you do not need to do anything to offer this service. It's all done for you.

Configuration guide

Beacon is pre-configured to allow you to start using it direct after completing the set-up process. You may wish to customise beacon. There are a number of ways to do this as covered in this section including adding different file types, adding menus and changing the look and feel of your beacon installation.

MIME types (file types accepted for upload)

A MIME type is a Multi-purpose Internet Mail Extension (MIME) type. It identifies the format of a file that beacon accepts for upload. It also enables you to identify an application that will read the file.

WARNING: Allowing people to upload files containing worms, viruses or any malicious code will result in you being responsible for spreading that code to both the server and any user downloading the file.

This guide DOES NOT cover any aspect of file management, file testing, monitoring or virus control. Consult a systems administrator before adding any file types especially if those files contain code that can run (macros or scripts). When it comes to worms and viruses never think “oh I'll get away with it” or “it won't happen to me” - it will and it hurts.

Edit the config/config.inc.php file and scroll down to the section marked “MIME CONFIGURATION”. You will see a 2 line configuration per MIME type:

```
$c_node['file']['mime'][1]['mime'] = "image/jpeg";  
$c_node['file']['mime'][1]['suffix'] = "jpg";
```

The [1] must be a unique number. You can add a file type by adding two lines to this list.

Example of adding a MIME type

You want to allow contributors to upload and read MP3 (sound) files to your beacon installation.

Go to your favourite search engine and type in “MIME type list”. You will soon find a listing of all MIME types available to you. You will find the MP3MIME type listed:

```
audio/mpeg - mp3
```

In the config file the last item in the MIME configuration list is:

```
$c_node['file']['mime'][5]['mime'] = "text/plain";  
$c_node['file']['mime'][5]['suffix'] = "txt";
```

The unique number for the last MIME type is 5, therefore the next available unique number is 6. We can now add the next two lines to the config:

```
$c_node['file']['mime'][6]['mime'] = "audio/mpeg";  
$c_node['file']['mime'][6]['suffix'] = "mp3";
```

Your beacon installation will now accept contributor upload of MP3 files.

Mapping multiple MIME types

sometimes MIME types vary from browser to browser. Beacon can map one MIME type to another.

Add an array item for each instance of the MIME types you want changing to the config browser MIME type config array.

Example

You wish to map a MIME type “image/example” to “image/png”. Append the array variable with

```
$c_node['file']['mime']['browser_path'] = array(array("from" => "image/pjpeg",  
"to" => "image/jpeg"), array("from" => "image/example", "to" => "image/png"));
```

Setting up a file type for embedding in a page

Beacon does all the work for you when you add a MIME type. The only thing that is required is for you to make an icon image of the file icon.

Adding an icon to a file type

File icons need to follow a specific naming convention of file_<suffix name>.png . You will need to make a png file as a thumbnail image of the file icon.

Example if creating an icon image for a MP3 file :

1. Go to the template/img/ directory and copy and paste file_txt.png
2. Rename your copy to file_mp3.png,
3. Open the file an image editing application of your choice (that supports png file formats).
4. Navigate to a local MPS file.
5. Screen grab the screen and paste the screen image into your image application.
6. Crop the image so that only the MP3 icon is left.
7. Copy and paste you MP3 icon over the text icon.
8. Save.

SWF file format and formats that require plug-ins.

We are building a set of plug-ins to the Wiki which allow you to embed files such as video and flash into your wiki pages. Flash is available for download and others will follow soon. Please see <http://www.barnraiser.org/downloads/> for availability.

Templates

The templating system allows you to simply change the graphical and user interface (look and feel) design of your beacon installation. You may wish to implement your company brand or change a font colour. The templating system allows you to do that easily.

You do need an understanding of HTML (XHTML) and CSS. We recommend that you pick up an introductory book if you are unfamiliar with these standards.

If you are familiar with XHTML and CSS you can edit the template files. Back up your beacon directory then navigate to the template/ directory. In it you will find all template files and images used within the interface.

Beacon has an outer template which contains menus and outer elements (top navigation and logo, side bar and bottom copyLeft statements). The outer template is called default.tpl.php.

An inner template is inserted into the outer template when beacon renders your page. The name of the inner template reflects the name of the page you are on, so `http://my_beacon_installation.com/index.php` will have a template name of `index.tpl.php`.

Embedded in the templates is PHP code. This allows us to insert the data into the template. PHP starts with `<?php` and ends with `?>`. Unless you are very familiar with PHP do not edit anything between a `<?php` and a `?>`.

Menus

We supply two menus as standard (left side menu and bottom menu). You can add a menu by following the steps below. Please see the user guide for information on populating a menu (adding menu items).

1. In the `config/config.inc.php` file add a line to the menus configuration:

```
// MENU CONFIGURATION -----  
$c_node['menu']['menu'][1] =      1; //side menu  
$c_node['menu']['menu'][2] =      2; //base menu  
$c_node['menu']['menu'][3] =      3; //new example menu
```

2. Name your menu in your language/`en_admin.lang.php` file:

```
$lang['arr_menu'][1] =            "side menu";  
$lang['arr_menu'][2] =            "base menu";  
$lang['arr_menu'][3] =            "new example menu";
```

Make sure the number [3] is the same in the both the config and language files.

3. In the default template copy the code for a menu that is already available. You will see a line at the top of the code:

```
$menu = $this->menu->selMenu(1);
```

Change the "1" to match your menu id (in this example "3").

4. Your new menu is now created. Populate it from the administration menu page and you will see menu items appear.

Language

We try to develop beacon in a way that provides a simple interface. As part of that we have chosen a terminology that follows the traditional publishing industry terminology as supposed to the Internet development industry. You will therefore see us describe "a wiki page" as "an article". If translating a generic language pack for release we ask you to follow the same approach.

All language displayed in the beacon interface is stored in two files:

```
/language/en_common.lang.php  
/language/en_admin.lang.php
```

The "en_" section of the filename defines the language, in this example "English".

If you wish to create another language you can duplicate the files and change them to reflect the new language code, for example Swedish:

```
/language/sv_common.lang.php  
/language/sv_admin.lang.php
```

Open the files and change all the variable values to be your language of choice then save the files. Please

note that they should be saved in UTF-8 format.

Open the /language/texts/ directory and change the language of the content of all files included in this directory.

In the config file you will see a Language section:

```
$c_node['node']['language']['default'] = "1";  
$c_node['node']['language']['pack'][1] = array('eng', null, 'en');
```

Make a new language var and place the Barnraiser_id and Aspell language name in the var. Example of adding Swedish:

```
$c_node['node']['language']['default'] = "1";  
$c_node['node']['language']['pack'][1] = array('eng', null, 'en');  
$c_node['node']['language']['pack'][2] = array('swedish', null, 'sv');
```

Open up the common language file and add the language name:

```
$lang['language'][1] = "English";  
$lang['language'][2] = "Swedish";
```

Note: Ensure the array id is the same for both the pack id and the language id – In the case of the Swedish example, note that both the config and language values use [2].

Support

Support is available from our 'barnbuilders network', a network for social networking and knowledge exchange around the Barnraiser project – <http://build.barnraiser.org/>

All our work is voluntary! The many hours spent developing this software has been donated by volunteers. The basic underlying principle of our movement is that you positively engage and that you contribute. If you want a feature and you cannot develop it then explain it, put forward your arguments as to why it should be included in the core build and then engage in discussions about it. If you have a problem with the software that you cannot solve just ask and if you can help someone else then do so!

Software and computers can be frustrating environments to work with. Taking your anger and frustration out on us achieves nothing. Go to the gym, loose it and then talk to other volunteers politely. In short, all communications with us should follow the above principles - Nice people get attention and nasty people don't.

Contributing

We are very happy to accept contributions to the beacon project. We recommend you discuss your ideas with us prior to sending us any contributions. Beacon will always remain slim in features and functionality to ensure that we maintain a simple, easy to use product.

About Beacon

Beacon was created by Tom Calthrop, founder of Barnraiser and maintainer of Beacon (tom-at-barnraiser-dot-org).

Barnraiser is dedicated to giving people the tools they need to share knowledge and further society through social software. If you like our work please consider donating to us!

More information can be found at <http://www.barnraiser.org/>

beacon preparation guide

It is very easy to dive into beacon and end up six months later with thousands of unlinked articles. That is ok if you are making a magazine (sort of), but definitely not ok if you are trying to achieve an environment in which people can navigate to content simply and quickly.

Write down your goal(s) and purpose for your installation of beacon. This can and should evolve with time, however as a statement it will guide both you and your follow contributors.

Spend time to think through the structure of your installation. You have two very separate things to think about:

1. How do you divide (categorise) your content?
2. How do I create a simple way to navigate to the content I want?

Adding to that you need to “think as the visitor” to the installation and NOT as the author or expert in the field.

Some things you can do:

As you hopefully know by now, you can link from one page to another in beacon. This means that you can create “listings” or “contents” of sections. You can also create a “table of contents” for a long page. Consider how you want your articles to work. Do you want a full and detailed categorisation? If so how will other contributors know to observe the categorisation guidelines that you have created? If you want all top level section pages to include a listing called “section guide”, then again you need to tell your contributors. It is therefore worth taking the time out to create a contributors authoring guidelines and seeking agreement (consensus) within your contributors community as this document develops. If they understand it they will observe it.

About contributors

Contributors are your most valuable asset. It takes a long time to develop a contributors network and you have to respect them as co-authors in your mission. They are not and should never be seen as “a cheap source of labour”. If you adopt this approach you will end up with a contributors list of one – you.

Many contributors will know more than you. Be prepared to be humble and constantly thank them. If you do not they will disengage from the group and you will lose a valuable resource.

Really think about how you will engage contributors. It pays to write an engagement policy that you adhere to. Everyone will respect you for doing it.

Ask yourself what a contributor wants. Taking Barnraiser as an example. Some people engage with us to make a positive change to the world, others to learn. To date no one has approached us “to make money”. We all know as developers that if we are in an environment where knowledge is shared, support can be sort and personal goals can be achieved then we will improve and that will also reflect in employment, thus payment is in “knowledge and friendship” which can lead to financial rewards. Learn why people wish to collaborate with you. An understanding of both individual and group goals is essential in any collaboration project.

People will lose their temper and make mistakes. As the maintainer of your site it is very important for you to think, consider and methodically address issues that arise. If you “lose it” just once you run the risk of destroying everything you have built! If you make mistakes own up to it. You set a standard by which others follow.

Finally, sit back and enjoy the experience. Networking and collaboration are fantastically rewarding experiences!

Example site policy document

Coming as soon as we find a lawyer that would be prepared to co-author such an article. We aim to create an open and free authoring environment in which peoples rights are protected. If you know a lawyer who may wish to donate some time to this project please contact us.

--- DOCUMENT ENDS ---