

This is another installment in the series of training modules instructing faculty and staff in the use of the Ensemble Content Management System. In this module, I will review the Ensemble CMS Content Explorer.



First, let's log in to the Ensemble CMS system. The url is https://ensemble.vt.edu/Rhythmyx/login

The link is located on the Unit Office CMS Web Site or you may wish to save the url in your Browser favorite list.

To log in, enter your PID and password, then hit the "enter" key or click on the "login" button the screen. You will be logged into the Extension Offices community. Please be patient as the Ensemble Java application loads; this may take a minute.

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After the application has fully loaded, you see the Content Explorer user interface. Let's start at the top where the user id and roles and the community are identified. Your Community and Roles will determine much of what you see within the rest of the Content Explorer interface.

You'll see your User name, shown as your VT PID. Next you'll see your Roles in the system.

There are only two types of roles in the Extension Office community, Editor and Authors. Unit Coordinators and UAAs are designated as Editors; everyone else in an office is designated as an Author. Editors and Authors can create, edit and publish content. However, Editors also have access to edit the office Home page.

Last, your community is listed. Communities define where in the CMS you have access to manage websites. All of the office sites are in the Extension Offices community. Unit-based faculty and staff will only be working in this community.

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The area below the header should have a familiar look, as it appears and functions similarly to the Windows Explorer interface. The left pane is called the Directory. The right pane is the Display, which lists the contents of an element selected in the Directory. Let's look more closely at the Directory pane.



The Directory has four main elements – Sites, Folders, Views, and Searches.

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The Sites element is where a directory tree has been setup for all of the office websites. So there is a site folder for each Unit office in this list.

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The Folders element provides another view of site content; however, the Extension Office community does not use the Folders element.



The Views element displays content sorted and selected according to predefined parameters. We'll explore this element in more detail a bit later.



And finally, with the Searches element, you can find and obtain content by specifying your own selection criteria. Clicking on a Saved Search is similar to a View, except instead of predetermined content, you have the option to modify the selection criteria. We will also review this section in more detail later in the module.



Now let's take a look at menu items at the top of the Content Explorer screen. The Menu Bar contains the following items: Content, View, Site Explorer, and Help

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The Content menu initiates the creation of a folder or new content items in a folder that you have highlighted in either the Directory or Display panes. So in this example from the content menu, we are showing the creation of a new item, specifically a new Ext Bio content item to be placed in the Staff folder of the Bedford Unit website.

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You can also access a menu of similar options by right-clicking on a folder in the Directory.

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The View selection in the menu bar displays two choices. With the Refresh choice you can refresh the page. The Options selection allows for changing the appearance of Content Explorer by bringing up a Display Options window.

In the Display Options window, you can change the color of the background, the text, or the menu options, and also change the font and type size so that the Content Explorer window is easier to read.

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The Site Explorer menu bar selection has not yet been activated in Ensemble CMS.



Help opens the in-line Help menu in a new window.

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Also in the Menu Bar you will see the Content Path, which provides further details about the location if content items. When you click on a folder or item in the Directory or Display pane, the Content Path will show you where that item resides within the Ensemble CMS organizational infrastructure. In this example, you can see that we have highlighted a Ext Bio content item, located in the staff folder of the Bedford folder which resides in the extension offices directory tree in the Sites element.



You can customize way information is presented in the columns so that it suits the way you work better. To do this, click on any column header to toggle between an ascending and a descending list of items.

To change the actual format of columns themselves, you can select from a list of formats available to you, which will depend on your permissions with the element selected. Rightclick the element in the Directory and select **Change Display Format** and then choose the format you want to use. You can change the format for each folder individually, to facilitate using the different information.

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Now let's put it all together and navigate our way through Content Explorer. We start by opening the Offices directory in the Sites element. Clicking on any item with a plus sign will open the items in that directory.



Working within your site is very easy. When you select an office site folder in the Directory, the contents appear in the Display pane, where you can work with them. In this example we have opened the Bedford folder in the Directory which then displays it's contents in the Display pane.



You can also open folders within the Directory pane to see expanded views. Here we have opened the Bedford folder to reveal its subfolders. We also have open the Programs folder to reveal its subfolders of 4-H ANR, CV and FCS.

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If you click on a folder in the Directory, you can see what the folder contains in the Display. We have opened the 4H folder to display its contents.

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If you want to work with content inside of a folder, you need to select it in the Display and right-click on it to see the options available for that content item in the Action Menu.



Now I want to go back and review some of the functions of the Views and Search elements. Think of the Views and Search sections as alternative views to your content stored in the site folder for your office.

The Views element displays content using predefined parameters. Let's review some of those parameters.



The first parameter is the "**Checked Out By Me**" selection. This view allows you to see content that is checked out to you. This is very useful to check everything back in at once, since content cannot be published if it is checked out. Once you have the list of content, shift-click the items to select them all at once and then right-click to select **Check-in**.



The Extension Office community does not use the Inbox view.

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The content shown in the display pane when you click on **Outbox** is everything you have created.

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**Recent** displays all content with your name on it from the last 48 hours.

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To see all content created or modified by you during the current login session, click Session.

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**Community Content** shows all content in the Extension Office community.



If you are trying to find specific content, you can use the Search element to find it.

A nice feature of the Search element is that you can define and save a search so you can use it again later. Your other option is to use a default search. We'll create a new search so that we can define the fields. Default searches work exactly the same way, there is just no option to save them.

The first step is to right-click on the New Search element and select Edit Query to open the Content Search dialog window.

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In the Content Search window that opens, enter your search terms and any additional information to define the search using Search Criteria.

In this example, I have elected to search for all of my Ext General Content pages that I have created, so I limit the search to Ext General Content items and enter my PID in the "Created by" field.

Once you have your criteria selected, click OK to start the search and the results appear in the Display pane.



If you wish to save those search criteria for future use, right--click **Search Results** and select *Save As* to open the **Save Search** dialog box. You will give the saved search a name and description. The "**Show to**" option lets you specify who has access to the search, from just you, to anyone using Ensemble. Click OK to save the customized search and return to the Content Explorer.

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The saved search will be listed in the Search element. To use a saved search query again, just Click on it. It will provide you a completely updated search based on the criteria you had saved.

If you ever need to edit the search query, right-click the search and select Edit Query to change the values and then click **OK** to save it again.

You can also customize the fields included in a search by clicking **Customize** on the Content Search dialog box to display the **Field Selection Editor** screen. Select items in **Available Fields** and click **Select** to add them to **Selected Fields**. You can also remove or change the order of the fields. Once you are satisfied with the criteria to be used, click **OK** and perform your search query as before.

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A predefined search view provides another way to access content that you have created. Highlighting the saved search, will display the search contents in the display pane. If you want to work with a content item, select it in the Display and right-click on it to see the options available in the Action Menu.

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Before you start creating content, there are a couple of critical guidelines you need to know.

Only work within your Unit web site or those where you have programming responsibilities and permission from the UC of those units. Make sure you are in the correct site before you start working. You can check your location by looking at the directory pane and scanning the folder list or you can use the Content Path. Only work on the unit sites.



A second guideline has to do with the type of content that you can work with in the CMS. Please note that you only have permission to create Ext Bio, Ext Brief, Ext Feed Reader, Ext File, Ext General Content, Ext Image, and Ext URL content items. Other content items like Ext Auto Index and Ext Nav landing page you do not have permission to manage.

Content Proper	ties
* Filename:	fall_2008_teen_weekend
* Display Title:	Fall Teen Weekend
* Start Date:	2008-10-01 00:00:00
Expiration Date:	2008-11-17 00:00:00
Description:	

A third guideline is related to effective labeling of your content to allow for efficient searching of that content. With hundreds of users creating content in the Extension community this is an important concept to understand.

Whenever you create something in the CMS, a dialog box will ask you to enter a filename for it. This is the name that is used by the CMS program itself. As long as you use letters az, either capitalized or lowercase, and no spaces or special characters, the name will be fine. If you don't want all of the words in the name bunched up, you can use either a hyphen or an underscore to separate them.

If you accidentally enter in a space or special character, you will get an error prompt, and have to correct the error before you will be able to proceed.

Finally, consider how you will name items in your site. If you make the name very generic, you might have trouble finding the correct content. For instance, if you name an item about 4-H Camp something common, like "camp," when you do a search for that item, every item with that name in the Extension community will be shown. With a 107 units having camp, you will be searching for your camp item for a long time. So, consider making the names for your content as specific to you as you can. Use your unit name in the title



A final note. The Active Assembly and Active Assembly Table Editors commands from the Action menu are not used in the Extension Offices community.



For additional information about working with Content Explorer we suggest that you download the print version of the Ensemble CMS User Manual or view the Ensemble in-line Help menu. The url for the Ensemble CMS User Manual http://www.ensemble.cms.vt.edu/user-manual/index.html. Your District AIT can also provide you assistance.

You will also become more familiar with the Content Explorer as you review the other training modules in this series. We suggest that you review each module and then practice what you learned using your own unit web site.



You may also find the support resources found on this page helpful.