

# Commenting system

Extension Key: **comments**

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## Introduction

### What does it do?

This extension provides commenting capabilities to TYPO3 pages or to virtually any TYPO3 record available in frontend in a single view (like single news item, single album image, etc).

This extension may replace *ve\_guestbook* extension in *timtab* or as commenting system for *tt\_news*. Separate extension is available to import all *ve\_guestbook* comments to *comments*.

This extension was created by Dmitry Dulepov for the Netcreators BV.

### Features

Extension has the following features:

- Comment pages
- Comment records
- Comments are displayed in pages
- Highly customizable template, for example:
  - Number of messages per page
  - Show/hide fields to comments
- Available fields (labels can be customized):
  - First name

- Last name
- E-mail
- Home page
- Location (city, for example)
- Comment
- Set fields as required or optional
- E-mail address syntax validation
- Fully localizable (including date format through PHP strftime() function)
- Automatically clear cache for any page(s) when comment is added
- Close comments after predefined period
- Close comments for individual records immediately or after period (through supplemental *comments\_ic* extension)
- Prevent duplicate comments (for example, several subsequent POST requests)
- See IP address of the commenter in BE
- Import messages from ve\_guestbook (\* will be available soon!)
- Spam control
  - Filter out typical guestbook spam
  - Force all messages to pass approval
  - Automatically decide if message should be approved before it can appear on the web page
  - Send e-mail to designated e-mail address about suspicious messages
  - Hook to connect external spam checkers
- Full TYPO3 caching supported (USER object!), which highly improves web site performance
- Automatic cleanup: removes comments if "parent" record is removed
- External CSS stylesheet can be included through the template (no need to modify web site TS setup for this!)
- Automatically use FE user data to fill comment form
- Extends tt\_news to show number of comments in LIST, SEARCH and LATEST views
- Integrates ratings from "ratings" extension
- Automatically find links in comment text and convert them to clickable links (can be turned on and off)
- Lots of hooks to customize comments

## Screenshots

There are screenshots also in other sections of this manual. This screenshot shows default template with default styles with ratings enabled. Default template has many CSS classes, which allows very customizable styling.

aaa, 2007-11-16 18:51:12:

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nam quis sapien sed augue facilisis consequat. Donec pretium urna eget diam. Phasellus consequat arcu at tellus. Nulla in risus cursus diam iaculis fringilla. In molestie. Etiam accumsan. Pellentesque sit amet eros.



Rating: 2.5 of 5. 2 vote(s).

Click the rating bar to rate this item.

asdfasmdf.a,sdfm, 2008-02-01 21:25:00:

Nullam convallis tempor lacus. Maecenas tortor. Aliquam orci sem, pharetra non, luctus eget, sodales vitae, risus. Pellentesque justo. Maecenas tincidunt. Morbi ac lectus sed magna tempus facilisis. Morbi ac nibh facilisis nunc condimentum imperdiet. Fusce fringilla gravida metus.



Rating: 3.7 of 5. 3 vote(s).

Click the rating bar to rate this item.

#### Add comment

\* - required field

First name:

Last name:

E-mail:

Web site:

Location:

Enter the code:

Content:

## Acknowledgments

Creation of this extension was sponsored by **Netcreators BV** – an international TYPO3 company from Netherlands. Special thanks go to **ben van 't ende** for his continuous supports, reviews and advice during development process.

While developing this extension, **XMIND 2008** software was used for collecting ideas and making development plan. Thanks to **Mango Software** for their exceptional mind mapping product.

## Having questions?

Author kindly asks to post all questions to the "English" TYPO3 mailing list. Please, avoid sending e-mails directly to author.

## Users manual

### Inserting comments to page

When inserting new content element, scroll down to the end of "New content element" wizard and click on the "Commenting system":



This will insert a plugin for commenting system as a new content element. This operation has to be done twice: once for comment list, another for comment form. See next section for details on configuring the plugin.

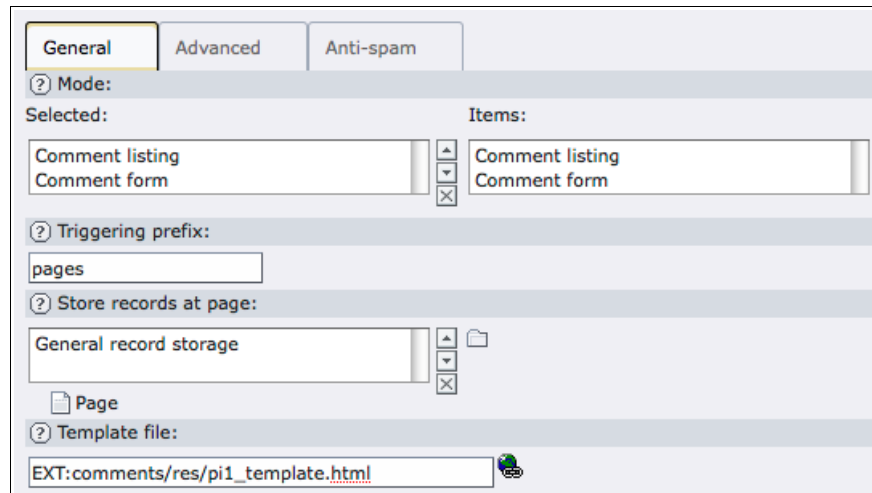
## Customizing comments

All comments options can be configured either through TypoScript or through plugin's configuration when it is inserted as content element. TypoScript configuration should be used when plugin is inserted through TypoScript setup (for example, as "TypoScript object path" in TemplaVoila or as a part of flexible content element). For information on TypoScript configuration see "Configuration" section later in this manual.

**Warning!** Flexform configuration always override TypoScript configuration when corresponding field is not empty!

Plugin configuration consists from several tabs.

### General tab



The screenshot shows the 'General' tab of the plugin configuration. It has three tabs: 'General', 'Advanced', and 'Anti-spam'. The 'General' tab is active. It contains the following fields:

- Mode:** A section with two columns. The 'Selected:' column has a list box with 'Comment listing' and 'Comment form'. The 'Items:' column has a list box with 'Comment listing' and 'Comment form'.
- Triggering prefix:** A text input field containing 'pages'.
- Store records at page:** A list box with 'General record storage' selected.
- Page:** A small icon representing a page.
- Template file:** A text input field containing 'EXT:comments/res/pi1\_template.html' and a globe icon for file selection.

**Mode** defines what the plugin displays: comment listing and/or form to add comments.

**Triggering prefix** defines what parameter in URL triggers displaying of comments. The value depends on another plugin and its parameters. Typically this parameter will be *tx\_extkey\_pi1* but some older plugins have different values (for example, *tx\_ttnews* for *tt\_news* plugin). Special value *pages* allows to comment on pages instead of records. **Note for plugin authors:** read **Configuration** section on information about enabling comments for your extension!

**Storage page** specifies where records should be stored. If empty, current page is used.

**Template file** shows template file to be used. It can either a path related to web site root (like *fileadmin/templates/comments.tmpl*) or relative to extension (for example, *EXT:comments/res/pi1\_template*). Click on the globe icon to select file interactively using TYPO3 file wizard.

### Advanced tab



The screenshot shows the 'Advanced' tab of the plugin configuration. It has three tabs: 'General', 'Advanced', and 'Anti-spam'. The 'Advanced' tab is active. It contains the following fields:

- Comments per page:** A text input field containing '11'.
- Close commenting after:** A text input field.
- Enable ratings:** A checkbox that is checked.
- Show last comments first:** A checkbox that is unchecked.

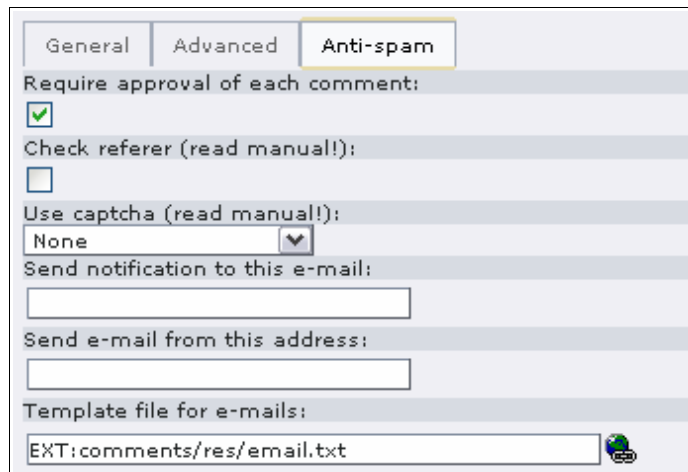
**Comments per page** specifies how many comments per page will be shown.

**Close commenting after** allows to automatically disable commenting if record is older than specified time period. Time period is a number followed by suffix. Suffix can be *h* (hour), *m* (month), *y* (year) or *d* (day). Comments extension takes care to change page caching time so that page cache expires when comments should be closed.

**Enable ratings** enables ratings for comment items. This option is only available if "ratings" extension is installed. Notice that users may rate comments only if comments are not closed for the item. If comments are closed, users will see ratings but will not be able to rate comments further. The option to close comments must be set not only on form but also on listing plugin instance!

**Show last comments first** reverses sorting order for comment listing. Normally comments are display from first to last. Checking this option reverses the order and last comments are show first.

## Anti-spam tab



**Require approval of each comment** puts comments on hold and sends e-mail to the e-mail address in **Send notification to this e-mail** with comment information (submitted form fields) and links to approve, delete or kill (i.e. completely remove from database). Approving comment also clears cache for the page and approved comment appears on the page.

**Check referrer** forces extension to check that request comes from the same web site. This option may have undesired results because many firewalls block referrer information and some browsers do not send this fields reliably. It is recommended not to use this option unless you are really paranoid.

**Use captcha** allows to select one of two captcha extensions (*captcha* or *sr\_freecap*) to use while submitting comments. Corresponding extension must be installed. Comments extension has good spam catching capabilities, so you may wish to try without any captcha first (captchas usually annoy users very much).

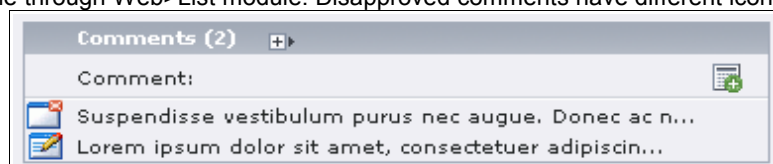
**Send notification to this e-mail** specifies e-mail address where to send messages with links to approve or delete comments.

**Send e-mail from this address** contains "from" e-mail address for notifications about new comments.

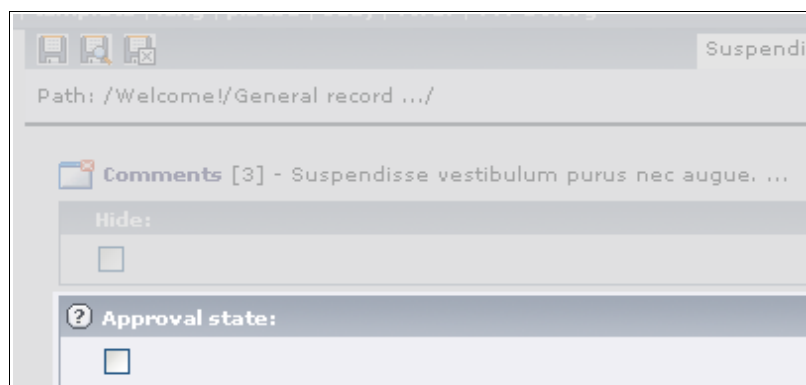
**Template file for e-mails** contains template file for e-mails. See **Template file** on **Basic** tab for information on how to specify path to template.

## Approving comments

If comment is set to disapproved state because it may be spam or **Require approval of each comment** option is set, comments will not be visible on the page. Administrator will receive e-mail with links to approve or delete comments. Alternatively it can be done through Web>List module. Disapproved comments have different icon in the List module:



The first item on the screenshot above is disapproved comment. When opened for editing, the following flag will define if comment is approved:



If check is set, comment is approved.

## FAQ

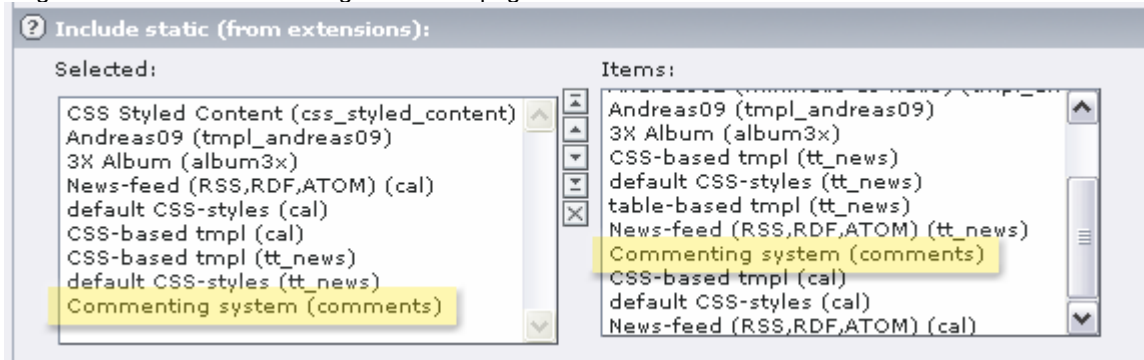
None yet. Ask in the TYPO3 mailing lists!

# Administration

## Adding TypoScript template

Extension's TypoScript template must be added to site's TypoScript template. To add a template, go to **Template** submodule of **Web** module, click on the **Info/Modify** there and click **Click here to edit whole template record** link. In the opened form scroll down to **Include static (from extensions)** and click **Commenting system (comments)** in the right box. It should appear in the left box.

The following screen shot shows that fragment of the page:



## Configuration

Plugin configuration is explained in **User manual**. This section talks about TypoScript configuration.

### Main configuration

Property:	Data type:	Description:	Default:
code	string	COMMENTS or FORM. Shows comments listing or form to submit comments.	COMMENTS
storagePid	integer / list of integers	Page uid where comment records will be stored. Current page if empty. Starting from version 1.4.0 can be a comma-separated list of page UID values. Comments will be searched in all these pages but will be posted to the first page in this list.	empty (value of {plugin.tx_comments_pi1.storagePid} constant)
externalPrefix	string	See <b>Triggering prefix</b> in <b>User guide</b> .	tx_ttnews (the value of {plugin.tx_comments_pi1.externalPrefix} constant)
templateFile	string	Template file for the plugin. Accepts either site-relative path or extension-related path (EXT: prefix)	EXT:comments/res/pi1_template.html (value of {plugin.tx_comments_pi1.templateFile} constant)
additionalClearCachePages	list of integers	Addition page uid values to clear when comment is submitted or approved.	
advanced	->ADVANCED		
preventDuplicatePosts	boolean	If set, prevents duplicate posts on the same page	1
requiredFields	list of values	Comma-separated list of fields to be required for comments. Available values: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• firstname</li><li>• lastname,</li><li>• email</li><li>• homepage</li><li>• location</li><li>• content</li></ul>	firstname,email,content
spamProtect	->SPAMPROTECT		
requiredFields_errorWrap	stdWrap	stdWrap for required field if field is not filled properly	noTrimWrap =  <span class="tx-comments-required-error">Error:  </span>
prefixToTableMap	->PREFIXMAP		

Property:	Data type:	Description:	Default:
showUidMap	->SHOWUIDMAP		
ratingsConfig	"ratings" plugin configuration	Allows to specify alternative configuration for ratings plugin. Typical usage: <code>ratingsConfig &lt; plugin.tx_ratings_pi1</code> <code>ratingsConfig.additionalCSS = EXT:myext/res/ratings_css_for_comments.css</code> Obviously userFunc is ignored. This parameter is not defined by default and completely optional. If default ratings configurations suits your needs, do not define this parameter.	empty
firstName_stdWrap	string	Wraps "First name" field	empty
lastName_stdWrap	string	Wraps "Last name" field	empty
email_stdWrap	string	Wraps "E-mail" field	empty
webSite_stdWrap	string	Wraps "Web site" field	empty
location_stdWrap	string	Wraps "Location" field	empty
content_stdWrap	string	Wraps "Content" field	empty

## Advanced options (->ADVANCED)

Property:	Data type:	Description:	Default:
commentsPerPage	int	Number of comments per one page	10 (value of <code>{plugin.tx_comments_pi1.commentsPerPage}</code> constant)
closeCommentsAfter	string	If set, automatically disables commenting for items older than this period. See <b>Close commenting after</b> in the User manual for more information.	empty
dateFormat	string	Defines date format to use for date/time information about posts. Format specifiers depend on dateFormatMode configuration option. See PHP function <a href="#">date()</a> and <a href="#">strftime()</a> for information about format specifiers. If empty, defaults to concatenation of SYS->ddmmyy and SYS->hhmm system variables (from Install tool) and dateFormatMode is forced to "date"	empty
dateFormatMode	string	Determines what PHP function to use for date formatting. Defaults to "date". If you want to use month or week days in national language, you have to use "strftime". Valid values are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● date</li> <li>● strftime</li> </ul>	date
preFillFormFromFeUser	boolean	If enabled and FE user is logged in, fills form data with information from FE user record. If sr_feuser_register is installed, attempts to use its fields too	1
enableRatings	boolean	If "ratings" extension is installed, enables web site visitors to rate comments. Notice that ratings change is only available if comments are not closed for the item. When comments are closed, ratings automatically become read-only	0
autoConvertLinks	boolean	If enabled, will search for possible links in comment text and turn them to links. Specifically the following texts are searched: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● http://</li> <li>● www.</li> </ul> Anything that starts from these strings and till next space will be converted to links. This procedure is not very clever but works in most cases. Links are always created with <code>rel="nofollow"</code> and css class "tx-comments-external-autolink". There is no way to change any of these two attributes.	1
reverseSorting	boolean	Reverses sorting of comments in List view. Normally comments are sorted from first to last. Setting this value reverses the order.	0

## Spam protection (->SPAMPROTECT)

Property:	Data type:	Description:	Default:
requireApproval	boolean	If enabled, messages will be set to disapproved state and notification will be sent to administrator (see <b>notificationEmail</b> below). If approval is not requested but <b>checkTypicalSpam</b> is set, messages still can be set to disapproved state and notification is sent.	1 (value of <code>{plugin.tx_comments_pi1.requireApproval}</code> constant)



Property:	Data type:	Description:	Default:
useCaptcha	string	Enables using captcha to post comments. Possible values are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0 – do not use captcha</li> <li>1 – use captcha extension</li> <li>2 – use sr_freecap extension</li> </ul> If value is not 0, corresponding extension must be installed to TYPO3	0 (value of <code>{ \$plugin.tx_comments_pi1.useCaptcha }</code> constant)
checkTypicalSpam	boolean	If set, extension automatically checks all comments for typical guestbook spam. If comments receives more than 1 spam point, it is automatically set to disapproved state and notification is sent to the author. To November 18, 2007 this catches most of guestbook spam.	1
considerReferer	boolean	If set, checks that referer of the current page is within the same web site. If not, message is set to disapproved state and notification is sent to administrator. See <b>Check referer</b> in <b>User guide</b> for more information and risks associated with this option.	0
notificationEmail	string	E-mail address to send notifications to	
fromEmail	string	E-mail address to send notifications from	
emailTemplate	string	E-mail template. See <b>Template file for e-mails</b> in <b>User guide</b> for more information	EXT:comments/res/email.txt
spamCutOffPoint	integer	If number of points is greater than this value, new comment is ignored, user receives spam warning message and e-mail to administrator is not sent.	1000

## Prefix-to-table map (->PREFIXMAP)

Comments extension must know table name of the commented record to perform automatic cleanup. Extension's configuration contains a map of triggering prefix names to table names. By default it looks like:

```
prefixToTableMap.tx_album3x_pi1 = tx_album3x_images
prefixToTableMap.tx_commerce_pi1 = tx_commerce_products
prefixToTableMap.tx_irfaq_pi1 = tx_irfaq_q
prefixToTableMap.tx_mininews_pi1 = tx_mininews_news
prefixToTableMap.tx_ttnews = tt_news
```

Extension authors, who want to enable commenting on their records, may add entries to `setu.txt` if their own extension to extend this map. Here is an example how it should be done:

```
plugin.tx_comments_pi1.prefixToTableMap.tx_myext_pi1 = tx_myext_mytable
```

So, if URL looks like this:

```
http://domain.tld/index.php?id=12345&tx_myext_pi1[showUid]=67890
```

than comments extension will understand that it must refer to `tx_myextmytable` for triggering prefix `tx_myext_pi1`.

## showUid map (->SHOWUIDMAP)

Some old extensions use names other than "showUid" to refer to a single record. Comments extension need to know this name to find record's uid. By default, only `tt_news` is configured in comments extension. Here is how default map looks like:

```
showUidMap.tx_ttnews = tt_news
```

All new extensions should use "showUid" parameter. But it is possible to use custom parameter with comments extension. Here is an example:

```
plugin.tx_comments_pi1.showUidMap.tx_myext_pi1 = uid
```

So, if URL looks like this:

```
http://domain.tld/index.php?id=12345&tx_myext_pi1[uid]=67890
```

than comments extension will understand that record's uid value is 67890.

# Using comments in other extensions

## tt\_news

Comments extension provides custom marker for `tt_news` to display number of comments inside List, Latest or Search views. Marker is `###TX_COMMENTS_COUNT###`. By default it will produce the following HTML:

```
<a href="url/to/news/item#tx-comments-count" class="tx-comments-count">5 comments(s)</span>
```



This HTML can be customized by modifying template supplied with comments extension. See `####TTNEWS_COMMENT_COUNT_SUB####` subpart in the template. `tt_news` marker is typically included after “more” link.

### Known problems

- None yet

## Hooks

### Using hooks

This section explains how to use hooks inside Comments extension and lists all available hooks.

New hooks can be installed using the following code in `ext_localconf.php` of another extension:

```
$TYPO3_CONF_VARS['EXTCONF']['comments'][$hookName][yourextkey] =  
'EXT:yourextkey/class.tx_yourextkey_hooks.php:&tx_yourextkey_hooks->methodName';
```

Notice that you can freely choose method name for the hook.

### Common hook parameters

Each hook receives two arguments:

Argument:	Type:	Description:
<code>&amp;\$params</code>	array	Contains hook parameters (specific for each hook, see hooks list below) and 'pObj', which is identical to \$pObj hook parameter.
<code>&amp;\$pObj</code>	<code>tx_comments_pi1</code>	Reference to calling class. Notice that you should have “&” before this parameter name.

### List of hooks

Section name in this chapter corresponds to *hookName* in section “Using hooks”.

#### closeCommentsAfter

This hook is called when comments extension must decide if commenting is closed for item. Parameters:

Argument:	Type:	Description:
<code>table</code>	string	Table name
<code>uid</code>	int	uid of the record

Hook should return integer Unix time value to indicate if item is closed. Returning “false” means “do not know”. The first integer value stops processing of other hooks.

#### comments

This hook is called when marker array is prepared for displaying comments list as whole. Parameters:

Argument:	Type:	Description:
<code>template</code>	string	Template subsection to be used
<code>markers</code>	array	Existing markers

Hook should return a modified array with markers.

#### comments\_getComments

This hook is called when marker array is prepared for displaying a single comment in a list. Parameters:

Argument:	Type:	Description:
<code>template</code>	string	Template subsection to be used
<code>markers</code>	array	Existing markers
<code>row</code>	array	Current comment row

Hook should return a modified array with markers.

#### externalSpamCheck

This hook is called when comments extension checks messages for spam. Hook can add or remove spam points based on its own logic. Parameters:

Argument:	Type:	Description:
<code>formdata</code>	array	A shortcut <code>\$pObj-&gt;piVars</code>

Argument:	Type:	Description:
points	int	Currently earned points

Hook should return integer value, which will be added to current number of spam points. To block message completely, accumulated points value must be greater than "spamProtect.spamCutOffPoint".

### eID\_postProc

This hook is called by eID script when comments extension approves or deleted comment using link in notification e-mail. It allows to post-process e-mail commands. Hook does not receive any custom parameters.

### form

This hook is called when marker array is prepared for displaying form. Parameters:

Argument:	Type:	Description:
template	string	Template subsection to be used
markers	array	Existing markers

Hook should return a modified array with markers.

### mergeConfiguration

This hook allows to alter/add configuration values for tx\_comments\_pi1. There are no additional parameters to the hook. Hook should modify configuration in the following way:

```
$pObj->conf['section.'][$param] = 'value';
```

### processSubmission

This hook is executed before record is inserted into database.

Argument:	Type:	Description:
record	array	Record array

Hook should return a modified record array.

### sendNotificationMail

This hook is called when marker array is prepared for sending e-mail notification to administrator. Parameters:

Argument:	Type:	Description:
template	string	Template subsection to be used
check	string	Hashed check value for eID call
markers	array	Existing markers

Hook should return a modified array with markers.

### processValidComment

This hook is called when comment is posted and visible on the web site. It is not called when comment is approved by the administrator manually! Parameters:

Argument:	Type:	Description:
uid	integer	uid of the new comment record

Return value is ignored.

## Translating the extension

Translation of the extension happens only and only through translation server. If you do not know what translation server is, read about it [here](#).

## To-Do list

- Better screenshots in this manual
- External spam checkers. Do you want to sponsor it? Contact author by e-mail in the beginning of the manual!