

Axyl Content Management – User Guide

This document is a brief guide to using the standard Axyl content management web interface.

Axyl content management concepts

On any given site web page there may be one or more content managed areas which can be edited, previewed and changed through the content management web interface. Note that not all of the content on a site web page is able to be changed through the content management web interface. Only that content which has been designated to work in this way. This means that it is perfectly possible to have a web page on an Axyl powered site that can't in any way be changed through the content management web interface.

Assuming that there is a particular page that contains content managed areas, each of these areas is referred to as a 'layout' by the content management web interface. Each layout must then be defined to contain a number of 'cells' which are layed out in a grid of rows and columns.

Each cell can then be set to one of two types a 'plain' cell or a 'block' cell. A plain cell is the simplest cell which allows only plain text and a more complicated block cell which allows you to provide HTML along with plain text. Block cells are the more commonly used cell that allows you to flexibly setup, format and layout sections of html inside the layout. Plain cells are a more specific and restrictive cell which are good for managing access to and displaying data in a table format.

One final concept is that block cells are then also made up of stacked sections called 'blocklets' which can kind of be thought of as paragraphs which come one after the other to make up the complete content of a block cell.

Creating your first content managed area

In order to create a content managed area you need to first create the content managed area's layout. Then you can edit the cells in the layout which hold the content you want to display.

Make sure you are first logged in as a user who has editing permission for content managed areas. If you don't log in now you won't be able to go any further. You can tell if your account has editing permission because after you have logged in, when you visit a page that contains a content managed area the content managed area appears with additional borders and headers. If your account doesn't seem to have editing permissions you should contact the site administrator.

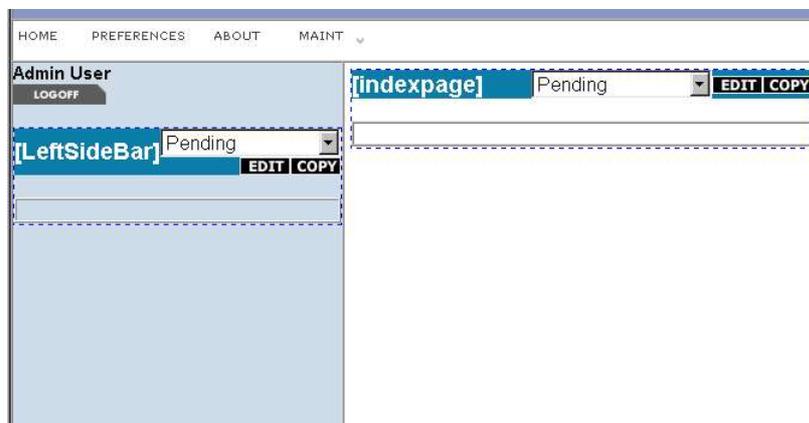


Figure 1 - Shows 'LeftSideBar' and 'indexpage' content managed areas with additional borders and headers indicating that logged in user has editing permission.

Once you are logged in, you first need to click on the 'EDIT' button to the left 'COPY' button of the content managed area you are wanting to work on. This 'EDIT' button opens up the layout

editing controls for that content managed area. This is where you specify the layout of the cells in a row and column format and what types of cells you want, either plain or block. There are also a number of other useful options in the layout editing controls.

The screenshot shows a form titled '[indexpage]' with a blue header bar containing buttons for 'DONE', 'PUBLISH', 'NEW', and 'SAVE'. Below the header, there are several input fields: 'Rows x Cols' (1 x 1), 'Background colour' (default colour), 'Show last modified' (checkbox), 'Last mod. format' (Mar 3rd 1999), 'Last mod. prefix' (empty), 'Index category' (empty), and 'Table width' (100%). There is also a 'Set all to' dropdown and a 'SET' button. At the bottom, there is a preview area with a single cell containing a dropdown menu.

Figure 2 - Layout editing controls for 'indexpage' content management area.

You can specify how many rows and columns of cells you want in your layout. Set the 'Rows x Cols:' boxes to '2 x 2' and then click the 'SAVE' button. Note that any changes you make on a content management form, such as the layout editing controls form, won't be set until you click on the 'SAVE' button for that form. You should now see something like the following:

The screenshot shows the same form as Figure 2, but with 'Rows x Cols' set to 2 x 2. Below the 'Table width' field, there is a heading '--- Column Width% Profile ---' followed by two empty text boxes. The 'Set all to' dropdown and 'SET' button are still present. The preview area now shows a 2x2 grid of cells. Each cell contains a dropdown menu. There are red and black symbols around the grid for merging and splitting cells.

Figure 3 - Created a 2 by 2 layout of cells

Notice now that there is a grid of 2 by 2 boxes at the bottom of this form. Each box represents the position of each cell in your layout.

You can then set the percentage width of the 2 columns of cells so that the first column of cells takes up 25% of the total width and the second column of cells takes up 75%. You can do this by putting the percentage values in the blank text boxes that are just underneath the '--- Column Width% Profile ---' heading. Make sure you include the '%' symbol with the values you type in these boxes otherwise the values will just be ignored. Click on the 'SAVE' button again to make your changes take affect.

You should also notice that along the edges of most of the cell boxes at the bottom of this form are some triangle shapes and other symbols. If you hover the mouse pointer over one of these symbols it will display the action that it performs if you click on that symbol. As you can see there are a number of different ways you can modify a standard grid of rows and columns, by merging, inserting and deleting cells. Once you have merged a pair of cells you can also split them again. In the top left cell box click on the right pointing black triangle in order to merge the top two cells together. As a last step, in the drop down box in between the 'Set all to' and the 'SET' button, select the 'Block' cell type, click on 'SET' which should set all the cell's drop downs to be set to the 'Block' cell type. Now click on 'SAVE' to make these changes take affect.

You should now have a layout setup looking something like the following:

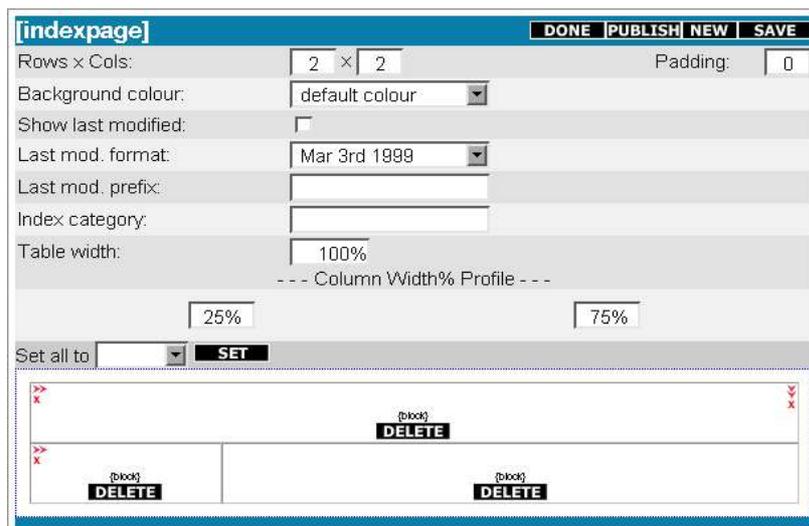


Figure 4 - Saved and completed layout setup.

Notice that once you set and save the cell types to the cells in the layout you no longer have the same set of controls around the edges of the cell boxes. You can no longer merge or split cells. But now that these cells have been set to a cell type you can now populate them with content, until you set a cell's type you won't be able to populate it with content. These things are important to keep in mind as you will want to decided on exactly what kind of cell layout you want to have before you start putting content in your cells otherwise it can be a lot more hassle to make changes later on.

Now that you have a layout structure consisting of three block cells to work with, you will want to populate these cells with content. So click on the 'DONE' button to exit out of the layout editing controls.

Your content managed area should now look something like the following:

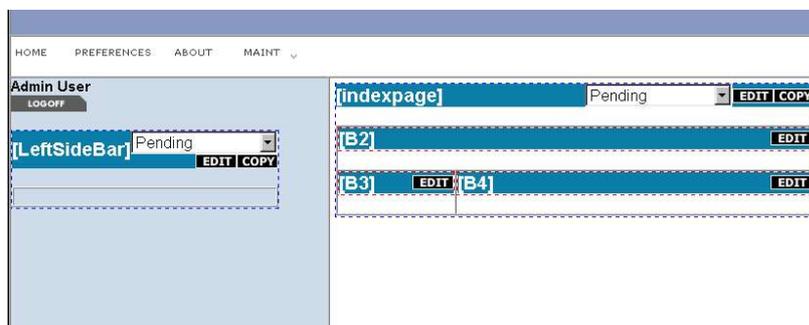


Figure 5 - The 'indexpage' layout now has three block cells, B2, B3 and B4 each with an edit button to access editing controls for that block cell.

There should now be three block cells in the layout you were working on, each with its own 'EDIT' button. In order to populate a block cell with content you need to click on its 'EDIT' button. So do that now in order to open up the block editing controls for one of the block cells.

When you open the block editing controls for a block cell you are presented with a large multi-section form with many different controls. It is not important that you understand all the controls on this form in order to effectively use this form. Most of the controls don't need to be changed, but they exist in order to provide flexibility for various settings. Each section starts with a black bar heading, namely 'BLOCK SETTINGS', 'BLOCKLETS IN THIS BLOCK', 'BLOCKLET SETTINGS', 'BLOCKLET CONTENT', 'INSERT SPECIAL CONTENT'.

[indexpage]
Pending EDIT COPY

PENDING [B1]
DONE SAVE

BLOCK SETTINGS

Columns: <input style="width: 20px;" type="text" value="1"/>	Gutter width: <input style="width: 20px;" type="text" value="0"/>	Gutter colour: default colour
Justify: default	Align: default	Background: default colour
Border width: <input style="width: 20px;" type="text" value="0"/>	Border colour: default colour	

Exportable in CSV format

BLOCKLETS IN THIS BLOCK

UP
DOWN
DELETE
ADD

BLOCKLET SETTINGS

Blocklet type: Text	Blocklet width%: <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Visible: <input type="checkbox"/>
Ruler: Top	Ruler width%: <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Size: <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>
default colour		
Heading: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	Level: 1	
default colour		

BLOCKLET CONTENT

Text size adjust: default size	RESET
Text colour: default colour	Alignment: Default
Table Options: default style	Auto-justify: <input type="checkbox"/> Row-stripes: <input type="checkbox"/>
Table CSV: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	IMPORT

INSERT SPECIAL CONTENT

Hyperlink: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	ADD
Link text: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	Remote site: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Webpage: default	
Image: default	ADD
Align: Left	Padding: <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>
Document: default	ADD
Display as: clickable icon	Width: <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/> Height: <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>
Media: default	ADD
Display as: clickable icon	Width: <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/> Height: <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>
Autostart: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Loop: <input type="checkbox"/> Controls: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Database: default	ADD
Where: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	
Format: Text	Table headings: <input type="checkbox"/>

Figure 6 - Full block editing controls for a block cell.

To start off with there are only two sections that are important for you to understand initially, they are 'BLOCKLETS IN THIS BLOCK' and 'BLOCKLET CONTENT'. The other sections aren't so important at this stage and they can be ignored for now.

The 'BLOCKLETS IN THIS BLOCK' section is the section you use to create, order and remove blocklets from a cell. All content in a block cell has to be contained inside a blocklet, even if that block cell only has one blocklet and all the content for that block cell is inside that blocklet. So in order to populate the block cell with your first bit of content you need to create a blocklet in this cell for the content to be placed in. So in the 'BLOCKLETS IN THIS BLOCK' section click on the 'ADD' button which will create a new blocklet. As soon as you create your first blocklet you will notice a whole lot of disabled controls on the form become active and the words '(enter a blocklet description)' appear in the '< Blocklet Description' text box, you should replace this text with an appropriate name for this new blocklet so that you can recognise it in the list of blocklets in the list above this text box.

Once you have done this go down to the 'BLOCKLET CONTENT' section and put some text in the large blank text area. By doing this you are adding content to the blocklet that you have just created. You not only can add plain text as the contents of a blocklet but you can also add complete bits of html. There are also some other controls in this section which you can use to make other sorts of changes relating to the current blocklet. After you have added your first bit of content to this blocklet, click on the 'SAVE' button at the very top right of this form. This will automatically save all your changes and also exit you out of the block cell editing controls. You should now see the content that you just added appear inside the block cell that you just edited.

Now go back into the editing controls for the block cell you just edited by clicking on its 'EDIT' button. Now add a new blocklet to this block cell the same way your created your first blocklet, and also give this blocklet a name in the '< Blocklet Description' text box. You should now see two blocklets in the list above the '< Blocklet Description' text box. Now create one more blocklet so that you have three blocklets in this block cell. The new blocklet's names that you just gave won't appear in the list above until you click on the 'SAVE' button to save all your changes, so do that now. Now click 'EDIT' again for this block cell that you have been editing.

Now click on one of the blocklet names in this blocklet list, and then click on an another blocklet name in the list. You will notice that the content of the main text area in the 'BLOCKLET CONTENT' field changes to the content of the blocklet that you just clicked on in the blocklet list. This is because all the controls and fields in the 'BLOCKLET CONTENT' section always show the content and settings for the blocklet that you have currently clicked on and selected in the blocklet list. Add any new content that you want to these second and third blocklets and then click on 'SAVE'. You should now see the content of all of these blocklets in the block cell.

If you click the 'EDIT' button the block cell that you have been editing again you can go back to the 'BLOCKLETS IN THIS BLOCK' section for that block cell and click on the 'UP' and 'DOWN' buttons to change the order that these blocklets will appear in and you can click one of the blocklets in the list and then click on the 'DELETE' button in order to completely delete that blocklet including any content that you had placed in that blocklet.

A final section in the block cell editing controls form which is initially useful to understand is the 'INSERT SPECIAL CONTENT' section. This section gives you some useful controls to use to help you generate special content to go into the main text area of the 'BLOCKLET CONTENT' section, in order to put special content into a blocklet. Special content are special axyl tags that look similar to html which allow you to place hyperlinks, images from the axyl media catalog, documents from the axyl media catalog, other media such as sound and video files from the axyl media catalog and even content from database queries into a blocklet as content to display.

To start with we will just go through how to insert hyperlinks and images from the media catalog using the 'INSERT SPECIAL CONTENT' section. You will notice that there are 5 'ADD' buttons in the 'INSERT SPECIAL CONTENT' section. One in each of the different sub-sections which are differing coloured rows.

The process is the same for each sub-section, you first select and input the settings for a particular kind of special content in that sub-section and then you click on that sub-section 'ADD' button which will generate the special content tag and put it at the very bottom of the main text area in the 'BLOCKLET CONTENT' section of the currently selected blocklet. You

can then edit the main text area to position this special content tag to its appropriate position.

So to insert a hyperlink, you need to provide the website address that the link should point to in the 'Hyperlink:' text box which is the webpage that the link goes to when someone clicks on it. Now you can either type that in there yourself or if it is just going to be a link to a page on the same site you can select the page in the 'Webpage:' drop down box. If you select a page, the address to that page will automatically get put in the 'Hyperlink:' text box and the title of that page will get put in the 'Link text:' text box. You can still go back and make changes to the 'Hyperlink:' or 'Link text:' text boxes after you have selected a page from the drop down. Say for example you want to provide something different in the 'Link text:' text box which is the text that the link is displayed as on the page. There is also another control which is the 'Remote site:' check box. If this check box is checked then the hyperlink will open the page in a new browser window, otherwise the page will be opened in the same browser window of the page that the link was on. You can then click on the 'ADD' button in the 'Hyperlink:' sub-section.

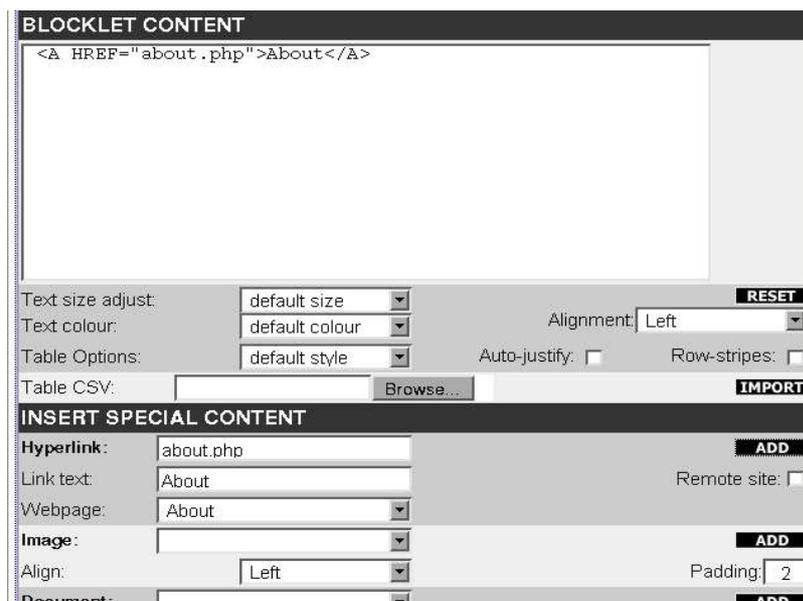


Figure 7 - Inserting hyperlink using the 'INSERT SPECIAL CONTENT' section.

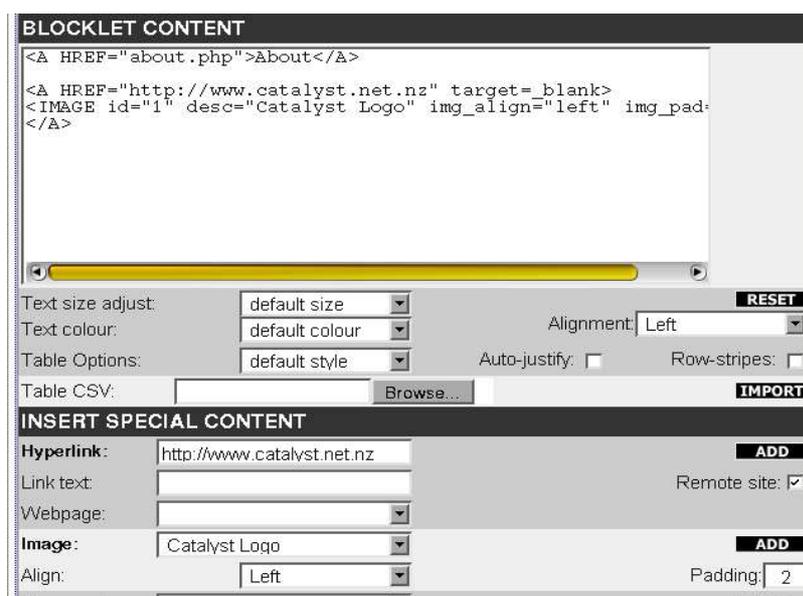


Figure 8 - Inserting hyperlinks and images using the 'INSERT SPECIAL CONTENT' section

You'll probably also want to place images as content in some blocklets. You can do this using the 'Image:' sub-section of the 'INSERT SPECIAL CONTENT' section if you have already uploaded that image to the site media catalog. So first select the image you want from the 'Image:' drop down box. You can also specify how text is positioned around this image with the 'Align:' drop down box and the amount of padding in pixels around the outside of the image with the 'Padding:' text box. Once you have specified your settings click on the 'ADD' button in the 'Image:' sub-section.

Now click on the 'SAVE' button to make all the changes take affect. You should now see exactly what your changes look like.

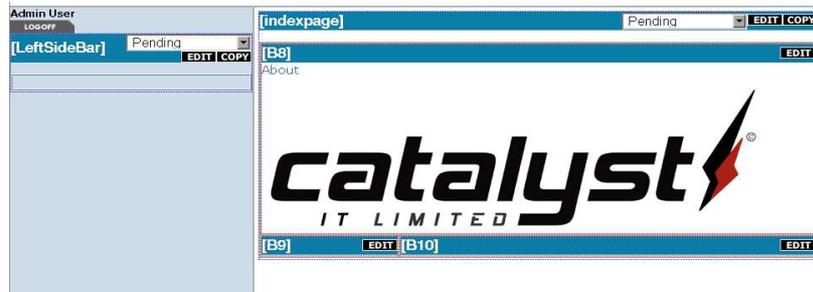


Figure 9 - Viewing the appearance of saved changes to a block cell.