AssociCom
We put the "Association" in Associations

A quick introduction to using AssociCom

Audience

This quick-start guide is intended for AssociCom administrators - the people who set up and maintain an AssociCom site.

Basic Introduction

AssociCom is a hosted web application for professional associations. Its goal is to strengthen the association by establishing strong bonds between its members, and by acting as a powerful knowledge and information sharing resource. Each AssociCom site is private to the professional association (or group of associations, if desired).

User Types and Views

There are two types of AssociCom user - normal users and administrators. Site administrators have all the same functionality as regular users, plus they have additional functionality for configuring and administering the site. In order to view the functionality available to you as an administrator, you need to turn the "Admin View" on using the switch found at the bottom right hand corner of your browser as shown to the right:

Once you have set the "Admin View" to on, the additional functionality for administrators comes by way of the "Settings" tab and "Admin" buttons found throughout the site, which are not present for regular uses.

As examples, in the image at right, the two circled buttons would not appear for regular users.
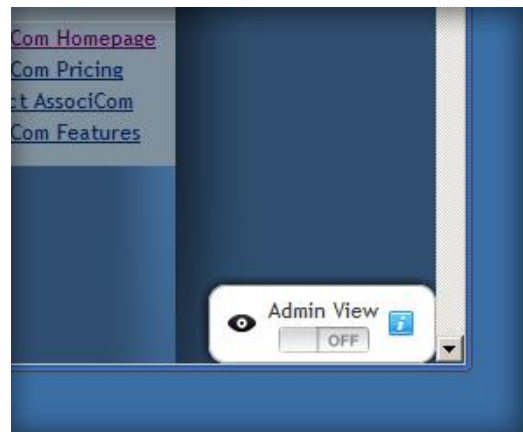
Site Setup Wizard

It is not necessary to spend much time initially setting up your site. You can change settings incrementally as you get to know and use AssociCom. However, you should feel free to browse the admin settings and experiment.

One quick way to accomplish this is to use the "quick start setup wizard". This can be accessed in the "Admin View" by clicking the "Settings" tab shown to the right, and then clicking the "Run Wizard" button shown below, near the top right of the resulting page:
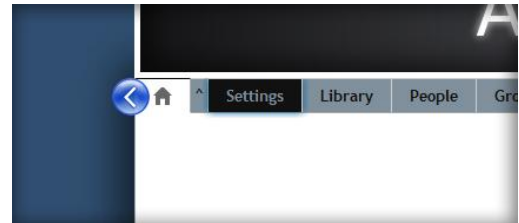
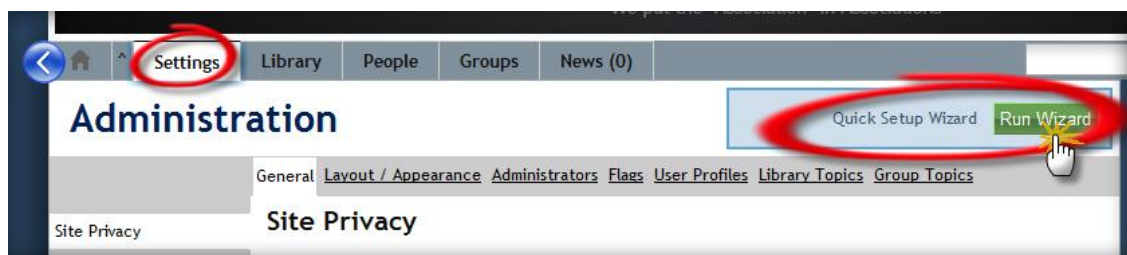**Figure 1 - Accessing the administrator settings**

Figure 2 - Accessing the setup wizard

This will lead you through some of the more important setup options.

Configuration Settings

When you click on the main settings tab as shown to the right (accessible only when "Admin View" is on), you will see configuration options for the following aspects of the site. Please feel free to click through them and experiment.

- Whether users must be logged in to view the site
- Setting the administrator e-mail addresses
- Whether new members are allowed to register themselves, and if so, whether they must first be invited by an existing member.
- A welcome message to display for private sites when the site is visited by someone who is not logged in.
- The limit on the size of files that may be loaded into the library
- How many historical revisions are kept for library documents when a new revision is added
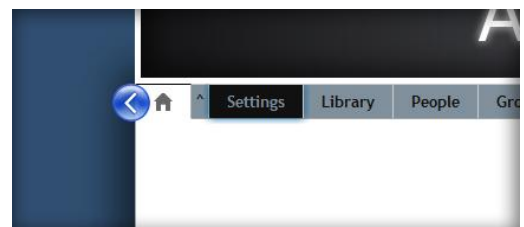
Figure 3 - Accessing the administration settings

- A wide variety of layout and appearance options including banners, logos, color schemes, homepage content (links, icons, welcome messages, etc), templates for e-mails that are sent from the site, the creation of labels that can be applied to members, groups or library items, and more.
- The ability to designate other users as administrators
- The ability to create any number of user profile fields (for example, perhaps you would like fields for professional designation, state/province of registration, company website, etc).
- Settings for privacy options
- The ability to configure the site document library. This includes creating a topic hierarchy for the library, indicating what type of member (administrator or normal user) is allowed to add items to each library topic, and also indicating what type of member is allowed to create library subtopics.
- The ability to create a topic area for groups. This is where other members can browse for groups of interest. It has the same configuration options as the document library.
- The ability to embed a dynamic list showing recent new items from your AssociCom site into your main association website.

Many of the site settings are self evident. Those that are more in depth are covered in other guides.

Having Other Members Join

An easy way to invite other members to your site is by clicking the "Invite a member" link. This can be found on the right had side of the page as shown at right. When you do this, the recipient of the invitation will be presented with a link to follow in order to join your site.

Please note that sometimes e-mail that comes from new sources (as will be the case for your new site) will be blocked by spam filters. As such, you may want to inform the recipient to check his or her spam filter. Once the recipient marks the e-mail as not spam, there will be no further issues.
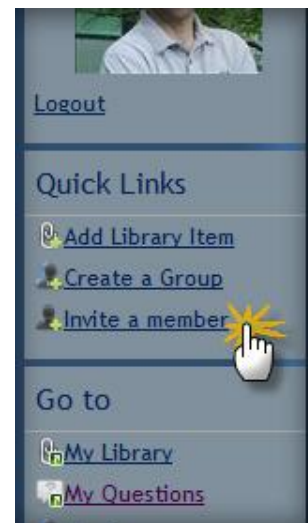

Figure 4 - Inviting a new member

Next Steps

Once you have done whatever initialization you wish to do, we suggest that you begin by adding some association documents or web links to your library, editing your personal profile by clicking on the

"Person" image under your user name (be sure to upload an image of yourself), and then creating one or more groups that you think might be of interest to your association members.

Once your AssociCom site is functional, an excellent way to introduce it to your members is to link it to your main member website. AssociCom has an "embed" tool which generates some code that can be inserted into you main website. When you do this, a list of items that have been recently added to your AssociCom site will be shown in your member website.

To do this, first click the "Settings" tab, then the "general" administration tab, then the "embed" tab as shown above.
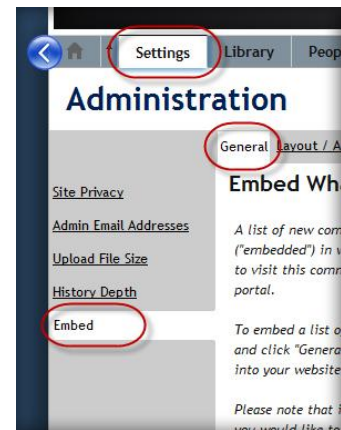
For Later Consideration

Your initial AssociCom site will, by default, use AssociCom's built-in member database. If you maintain an existing member database, AssociCom can be configured to connect to that database. Please contact us if you would like to do so.