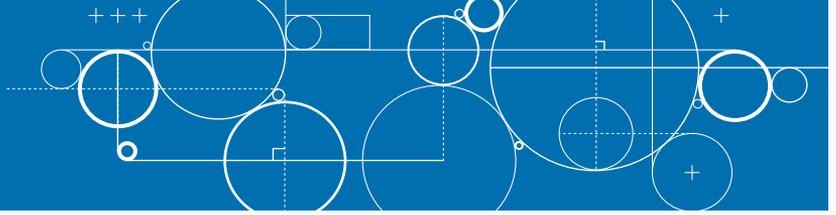


# Why Use Mambo?



**T**he Mambo Open Source Content Management System is a server-based tool that enables you to easily create and maintain highly functional Web sites. Mambo is very powerful and easy to use, making it equally suitable for developers skilled in IT or for hobbyists and do-it-yourselfers. Mambo is not the only Open Source Content Management System in existence today. Nonetheless, despite the presence of a number of competing programs, Mambo has been downloaded over 5 million times and powers hundreds of thousands of Web sites.

Mambo comes as a single archive of files that you install on a Web server. Mambo's technical requirements for the

hosting environment are not demanding; as a result, you can install the system on most Web hosts without difficulty.

Once you extract the Mambo file archive on the server, installation is a simple matter that you handle via a wizard interface. Total installation time varies, but generally speaking you can start with the file archive and less than 20 minutes later have a fully functional Web site, complete with an administration system. The full technical requirements and the installation process are detailed in Appendix A. Five factors, each discussed in detail in this section, combine to make Mambo so popular.

## Content Management

Mambo's strength is content management. The system gives you the ability to create, edit, and organize content in a variety of formats, using only a Web browser. The administration system includes tools to ease the burden of content management, including an easy-to-use WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editor. The WYSIWYG editor makes it possible to format text without having to understand or use HTML code. Basically, if you can use Microsoft Word to format text, then you can use the Mambo WYSIWYG editor because the interface and the tools are visually and functionally similar.

The Mambo content management system also supplies the tools you need to organize content pages into sections and categories and create navigation structures. The navigation can reflect the content hierarchy or you can make it separate from the organizational schema applied to the content. The flexibility to create various navigational structures is a key to working with sites that contain large amounts of content.

Menus and submenus can present the content to users in various fashions, and you can organize content inside the administration system in a schema that promotes ease of use for the site administrators.

Mambo also enables you to establish workflow hierarchies, where one class of user can contribute text, another can edit it, and yet another can publish it. Workflow controls are a necessity for large or corporate sites and sites that require some degree of review and accountability in the content creation process.

In Mambo, you can manage multilingual text content as well as content like images or files. The range of options the system presents makes it possible to employ Mambo for public and commercial Web sites, for private intranets, for personal sites, or for virtually anything in between. To learn more about the content management capabilities of Mambo, read Chapters 5 to 8.

**User Management**

The admin interface of the Mambo system includes all the tools you need to manage users and access privileges. While the Mambo user group hierarchies are limited in number, they do provide sufficient variety for content workflow for a variety of classes of administrators. The system includes enough flexibility to manage anything from a small site to a full online community. For more information about managing users with Mambo, read Chapter 4.

**Flexibility**

You control the look and feel of a Mambo site through the use of template files. You do not need to understand an arcane or proprietary syntax to build your own templates or to modify the templates. Mambo templates are standard PHP files where HTML and CSS do the formatting. The flexibility and ease of use of the template system is one of the keys to Mambo's success because it allows developers to create highly customized sites.

The Mambo code base is also very tolerant of users making modifications to the system. Many Mambo developers today started out by downloading and installing Mambo and then exploring what they could do with the files. It is hard to crash a Mambo site and even more difficult to permanently damage one. In the event you do succeed in crashing the site, you can easily restore it from a backup, or by reinstalling the core files.

**Extensibility**

Mambo was released to the Open Source world in April of 2001. In the following years, the system grew in complexity, ability, and scale. Additionally, a number of people developed a variety of extensions for Mambo. Today, third-party components, modules, and templates exist in significant numbers. Through the use of third-party extensions, you can customize Mambo to a great degree without having to do any programming yourself. You can find catalog management tools, shopping carts, forums, file management systems, multimedia tools, and other extensions across a broad range of categories. Many of the third-party extensions are free of charge while others are proprietary in nature and require the payment of a small fee.

Mambo is designed to accept and integrate third-party extensions automatically. The system includes automated installers that accept a third-party component, Mambot, module, or template easily and allow you thereafter to administer that new functionality inside the Mambo admin interface. The various manners for extending your Mambo site are discussed at length in the chapters that follow.

**Free Open Source Software**

Mambo is free software released under the GNU GPL (General Public License). The GPL provides protection for the source code and gives assurance that Mambo will remain free and open in the future. The license also means that you can use Mambo on any type of Web site free of charge. Developers can modify and redistribute the Mambo code set, as long as they respect the restrictions that GPL imposes.

Though it is an Open Source project, Mambo is backed by a stable corporate organization known as the Mambo Foundation. The corporate structure that Mambo uses is similar to that employed by other major Open Source projects like Mozilla and Eclipse. The nonprofit Mambo Foundation was created in August of 2005 to hold the rights to the Mambo brand and to shelter and promote Mambo. The existence of the Foundation helps assure users of continuity of development and that the code is backed by a dedicated professional organization. The Mambo license is discussed further in Appendix B.

# Understanding Key Mambo Concepts

Like any large system, Mambo does have its own vocabulary — or set of words and phrases that have specific meanings within the context of Mambo. Compared with other large systems, Mambo does

not overly burden you with acronyms and specialized terminology; nonetheless you should become familiar with Mambo verbiage. The list assembled here will see you through the vast majority of situations in fine form.

## Home Page versus Frontpage

Generally, when people speak of the *front page* of a Web site, they mean the site's entry page, or home page. In Mambo, when someone speaks of the *front page* in Mambo, they are referring to a specialized tool called the *Frontpage Manager*.

The Mambo Frontpage Manager manages the content items on the home page of the Web site. With the Frontpage Manager you can publish or unpublish items on the home page, or you can reorder or even change the format of the items on the home page. A key point to note is that with some Web sites, the Frontpage Manager may not actually control the home page; use of the Frontpage Manager is optional. The default configuration is for the Frontpage Manager to manage the home page. However, developers sometimes bypass the Frontpage Manager and build a different type of home page — one that uses other materials or components instead of the Frontpage Manager.

## Sections versus Categories

Sections and Categories are the two key organizational groups for your content. *Sections* are the highest level. *Categories* fit within Sections, and *Content Items* fit within Categories. You must assign all Categories to a Section. Likewise, a Section must have Categories, or it cannot hold Content Items. When you first create a Section it is empty until you create Categories and assign them to a Section. As you create Categories they too are initially empty, until you create Content Items to go into those Categories.

The Section/Category/Content Item hierarchy is the standard hierarchy in Mambo. Users who want to have only a 2-level hierarchy or a flat hierarchy still need to create Sections and then Categories. Most often, you handle this situation by either creating one Section to hold all the Categories, or by creating a redundant Section to hold each Category of the same name.

In Mambo, the only way to bypass the standard hierarchy is to use Static Content Items, which are pages that exist individually, outside of the standard Sections/Categories structure. For more about creating and managing Sections and Categories, see Chapter 5.

## Content Items versus Static Content Items

The Web pages you create using the content editor can take one of two forms, either *Content Items* or *Static Content Items*. There is no difference in the way you create the pages nor in the nature of their contents; rather, the difference lies in the way they relate to other content and the content hierarchy.

Content Items are pages that belong to Categories. As noted earlier, Categories, in turn, belong to Sections. Therefore, by definition, a Content Item is a content page that belongs to a Section and a Category. A Content Item is grouped with other pages in the same Category and can be grouped with other items in the same Section. The relationship in the hierarchy is fixed.

By contrast, Static Content Items are individual pages having no formal affiliation with a Category, a Section, or even another page. Static Content Items stand alone, independent from the site's content hierarchy. As a result, Static Content Items tend to be favored for creating individual pages that are somehow different from other pages on the site, or that do not need a Category or a Section to fit within the site. Therefore, a common use for Static Content Items is to create pages which stand alone in the site's hierarchy, like a Privacy Policy page or a Terms and Conditions page. Static Content Items are also popular with small sites with flat information hierarchies.

## Newsfeed versus Newsflash

Despite the similarities in their names, these two items are totally unrelated. RSS is commonly used by blog sites and news sites as a convenient tool for distributing their content. A site administrator can set up an RSS feed for the site's contents, and then others can subscribe to the feed to receive the new content automatically by way of an RSS Newsfeed reader. Mambo provides methods for both receiving and viewing Newsfeeds and for turning your site's content into an RSS Newsfeed that other people can see. A component called the Newsfeed Manager handles the management

of incoming Newsfeeds. The Newsfeed Manager is discussed in Chapter 10.

In contrast, a *Newsflash* is nothing more than a Mambo module that enables the display of content in a particular format. The Newsflash display format is configurable, but in the default configuration, it displays a short piece of content drawn randomly from one of the content categories. Each time a page containing the Newsflash is loaded, the Newsflash module displays a different content item. The Newsflash module is discussed in Chapter 11.

## Components versus Modules versus Mambots

You generally extend functionality in Mambo by installing either a component, a module, or a Mambot and letting them do the work. For a complex feature, the system may use a combination of these functional units. Understanding the differences between these items is more a matter of technical accuracy than necessity for the user. As far as

most users are concerned it does not matter whether something is a component or a module or something else entirely. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that the distinction between the items is more a matter of form than function.

### Components

A *component* provides a major functionality — for example, a forum or a file management system. A component's output typically appears in the main content area of a page, rather than in the side columns. You manage components via the Components menu. For more on components, see Chapter 10.

### Modules

*Modules* come in three flavors. They are either helper applications that assist components in performing a job, small independent functional units, or simply ways of displaying content in an abbreviated form. Typically modules appear on the page in either of the side columns or at the extreme top or bottom of the page. Modules are discussed further in Chapters 11 and 12.

### Mambots

Mambots are completely different in nature. They tend to invisibly integrate into the site and are, therefore, not visible to users and administrators. They provide valuable service by adding a behind-the-scenes functionality to the site as a whole. These items are probably best demonstrated by reference to examples: The WYSIWYG editor is based on a Mambot. A Mambot is also responsible for enabling search-engine-friendly URLs throughout the site. Mambots are discussed further in Chapter 13.

# Access the Admin System

**Y**ou must log in to the Mambo administration system to administer your site. The log in requirement enhances system security and helps prevent unauthorized visitors from making undesired changes or accessing private information.

By default, Mambo comes with a password-protected administration interface. If you have ever worked with other content-management systems, you know that some systems require you to manually set up secure access for the administrators. Mambo gives the protection automatically in the default configuration. During the installation process, Mambo creates the administration section and the first user for the system, who is named *admin*. The last stage of the Mambo installation wizard asks you to select a password for the user named *admin*. The first time you access the administration panel of a fresh installation of Mambo, you use the username *admin* and the password you selected during installation.

If someone else sets up your Mambo system for you, ask him or her for the username and password details.

The URL for the administration system login is always the same with Mambo sites. The standard format is the domain name, followed by `/administrator`. So, for example, if your site is named `www.mysite.com`, your administration access through the address is `www.mysite.com/administrator`.

Note that while Mambo has a password-protected interface for the administration system, users should always take steps to maintain the integrity of their usernames and passwords because the default system provides little real security. The majority of hackers access systems through the admin interface because they have either observed a user login and guessed a username and password, or can take advantage of users who allow the browser to store their username and password. Make sure you protect yourself from these common mistakes.

## Access the Admin System

1 Direct your browser to the Admin Access Screen by typing the URL in the browser.

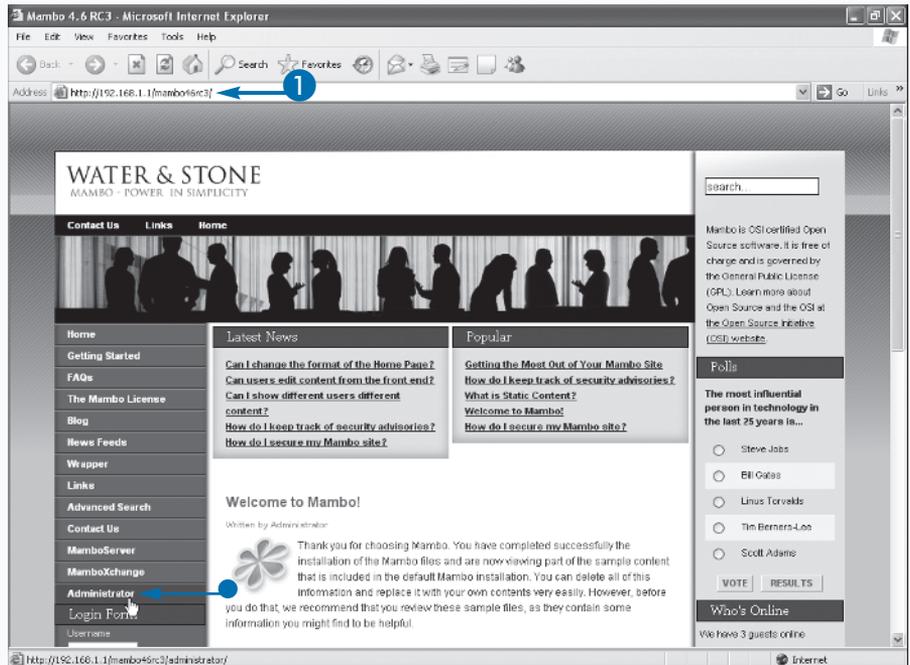
- If you have installed the sample data you can also click the Administrator button on the Main Navigation.

The Admin Access Screen loads.

- 2 Type your username.
- 3 Type your password.
- 4 Click Login.

If you entered the correct username and password, the admin home page loads.

If you did not enter the correct username and password, the system prompts you to try again.



# Introducing the Admin Interface

The admin home page, or Control Panel, provides useful information and quick access to a variety of tools. The Control Panel is a workspace and, as such, is a view of the admin system you return to repeatedly. To save time and effort and to enhance your effectiveness in monitoring your site, consider familiarizing yourself with the Panel layout.

Although the Control Panel interface is standardized, the tools and information vary according to a user's access privileges; higher-level users, like Administrators and Super Administrators, can access more tools and information while lower-level users see a limited set of tools and details. The interface reflection of the user's access levels is one of the

security features of Mambo. For more on user groups and privileges, see Chapter 4.

The control panel also contains a feature that allows you to switch between a simple and an advanced version of the interface. As an administrator, you may find the amount of information in the admin interface daunting, and if you have a narrow-bandwidth market, you may not want to load all the tools each time a new page loads. If you want a more basic interface, Mambo has a Simple Mode with fewer tools and details. Power users will no doubt keep the interface in Advanced Mode to see all available tools. To switch between the two modes, see the section "Toggle between Simple and Advanced Mode."

## Introducing the Admin Interface

### A Main Navigation

Gives you access to all the functionality in the Mambo administration system. The choices are arranged thematically and there is some redundancy.

### B Location Bar

Shows you where you are and which admin component is active.

### C Quick Icons

Handy palette of shortcuts that takes you directly to the most commonly used functions in the admin system. All the choices shown here also exist under the Main Navigation, but the icons provide one-click access.

### D Tab Bar

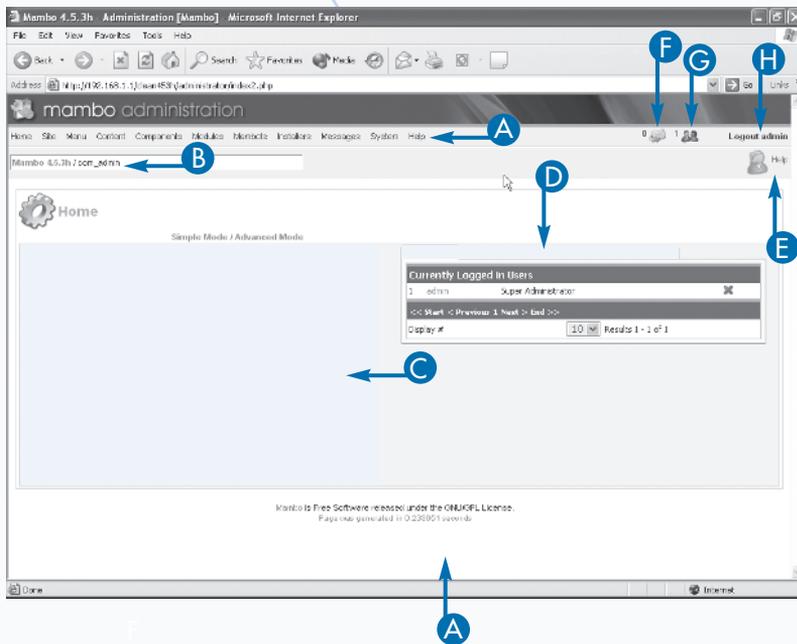
Provides different information to the administrator.

### E Online Help

Takes you to context-sensitive Help files. Clicking the icon triggers a pop-up window that loads the relevant information.

### F Messages

The number of messages waiting for you in the Admin Messaging System.



### H Logout

The link to log out of the admin system. Logging out takes you back to the Home Page.

### G Users

The number of users on the site. This figure updates every time the page refreshes. There is always some delay between a user exiting the site and the counter subtracting the user, so this is an approximate number.

# Change Tab Views

To quickly access different views, which contain various pieces of information and links, you can switch between tabs in the Tab Bar in the admin interface. The Tab Bar gives a prompt look at user activity and access to components and content. It contains five tabs: Logged, Components, Popular, Latest Items, and Menu Stats.

The Logged tab shows a list of the registered users currently logged in to the system. It shows the users' names and user group assignments and gives Administrators and Super Administrators the ability to force a user to log out. For more on forcing a user to log out, see Chapter 4.

The Components tab contains a list of the components installed in the system and a set of links to the primary tasks associated with each. This tab gives quick access

to a component's primary functions, and the links it contains echo those you find under the Components menu.

The Popular tab is a list of the most popular content items on the site, along with the dates they were created and the number of times they have been viewed. You can quickly open the item in an editing window via the item's name.

The Latest Items tab is a list of the Content Items most recently added to the site, along with the dates they were created and their authors. Again, you can open the item in an editing window via the item's name. Additionally, you can use the author's name to open the Edit User screen for the author.

The Menu Stats tab shows you the names of all the published menus along with the number of items on that menu. You can use a menu's name to take you to the editing screen for that menu.

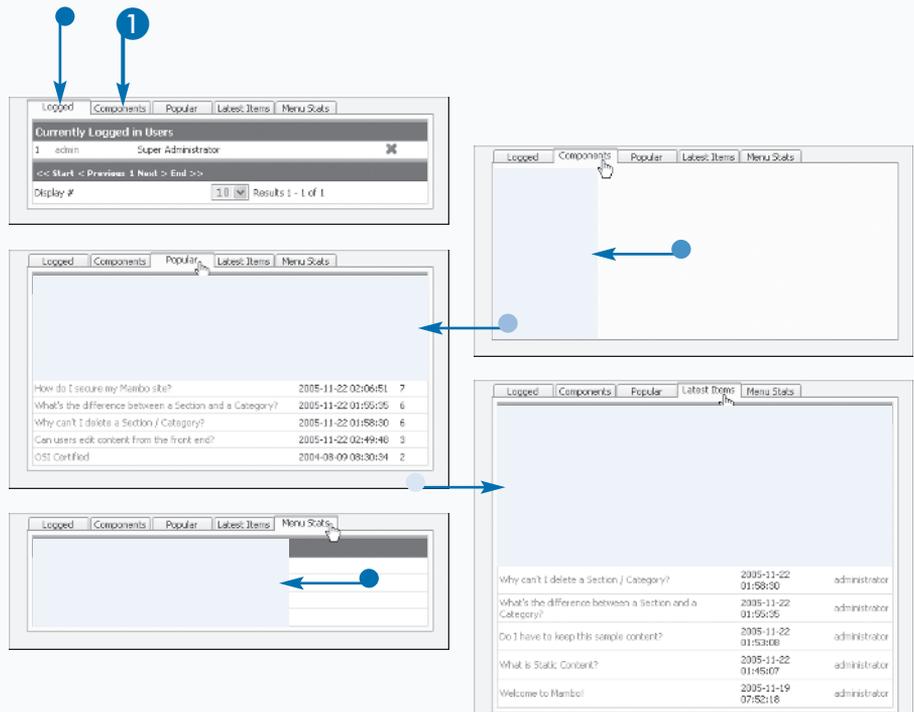
## Change Tab Views

- 1 From the Control Panel in the admin interface, click a tab.

**Note:** For more on the admin interface, see the section "Introducing the Admin Interface."

The tab content opens.

- The Logged tab shows a list of registered users currently logged in to the system.
- The Component tab lists the components installed on the system.
- The Popular tab shows the most popular Content Items.
- The Latest Items tab shows the most recently added item loads.
- The Menu Stats tab shows a list of the menus in the system.



# Toggle between Simple and Advanced Mode

You can change your view of the Mambo admin interface by switching between Simple and Advanced (default) Mode. Users who want fewer distractions and a faster-loading interface should use the Simple Mode because it shows only the most common tools. Users who are not concerned about bandwidth and who want to have all the tools available should leave the system in Advanced Mode. You may find it desirable to use Simple Mode while editing the content, due to the expanded viewing and editing area, then switch to Advanced Mode to add the final configuration details before publishing the item.

The difference between the Simple and Advanced Modes lies entirely in presentation. No tools are permanently blocked or restricted in Simple Mode.

Simple Mode just removes the less frequently used options from the viewable area. For example, the Control Panel in Advanced Mode shows a wide variety of options. If you switch the view to Simple Mode, the shortcut icons are reduced in number from eleven to four. The four visible choices manage content, while the hidden choices relate to ancillary tasks, like Global Configuration and User Management.

The option to switch between Simple and Advanced Modes exists on the Control Panel page and on the Content Item editing pages. On the Content Item editing screen, turning on Simple Mode hides the parameters and other advanced function tabs on the right side of the page, leaving the content editing area to expand the width of the window.

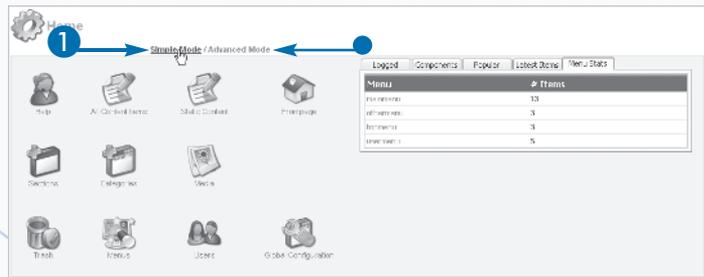
## Toggle between Simple and Advanced Mode

### USING THE CONTROL PANEL

- 1 On the Control Panel, click Simple Mode.

The simplified interface appears.

- You can click Advanced Mode to redisplay the advanced options.

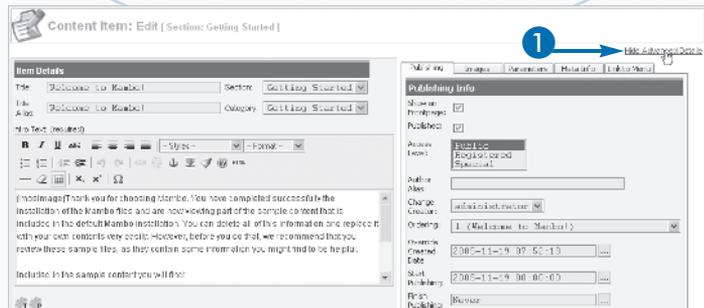


### USING THE CONTENT EDITING SCREEN

- 1 On a content editing screen, click the Hide Advanced Details link.

The right-hand tabs disappear and the content area expands.

- You can click the Show Advanced Details link to redisplay the advanced options.



# View Help Files

**Y**ou can access Help files at any time while administering your Mambo system. The Mambo Help files are intended to assist administrators with the common tasks associated with content and user management and can also help with the specifics of the interface. The system even includes a context-sensitive Help option that displays a window containing information about the screen the user is viewing at the time.

A variety of Help files are included in the Mambo distribution, and you can access them at any time from the admin system nav bar. The embedded Help files are arranged topically so that you can either browse or search them. Note that if your site has access to the Internet — that is, it is installed on a server with access to the Internet — you can draw the contents of the Help

files from the live Help site maintained by the Mambo team. The default setting of the system uses Help content that is embedded within your local Mambo system. If you prefer instead to draw the Help file contents from the live Help site, you can change the system settings through the Global Configuration Server tab. Be aware, however, that if your Mambo site cannot access the Internet, or if the Help site is not responding, then the Help link will display a 404 error message. For more information on setting Global Configuration options, see Chapter 2.

You can access context-sensitive Help files at any time using the Help icon on the top right side of a page. The context-sensitive files are embedded within the Mambo distribution and provide information specific to the screen that is displayed.

## View Help Files

- 1 On the Control Panel, click the Help icon.



The context-sensitive help appears.



# View System Information

**Y**ou can view a summary of key information about your server's operating system and your Mambo system and files using the System Information option in the Mambo admin interface. The ability to quickly access accurate information about your system and your file permissions is very helpful when you or someone else is troubleshooting a Mambo installation. Mambo presents all of the relevant information together under an admin menu so you do not have to use or remember arcane system-level commands or FTP to learn basic facts about your configuration.

The Mambo system presents the information in two places for ease of use. The most direct path is through the System Information option on the System menu. You can also reach the information by selecting the Help option on the main nav and then selecting the System Information option that appears on the Help screen.

No matter how you access the System Information you have three tabs of information. The first tab is titled System Info and includes details of your operating system and key components, along with an edited view of your configuration.php file. Note that there is some information edited out of the configuration.php file: sensitive information, like passwords that can impair your system security if disclosed to the wrong person. The System Info tab also displays the version number of your Mambo installation, which is essential information for troubleshooting. The second tab, PHP Info, shows detailed information about the version of PHP running on your server. The third tab, Permissions, summarizes the file access permissions of key directories in the Mambo installation.

Note that the System Information screens are purely informational in nature. There are no tasks or functions associated with these pages. The pages are, in other words, simply reference materials.

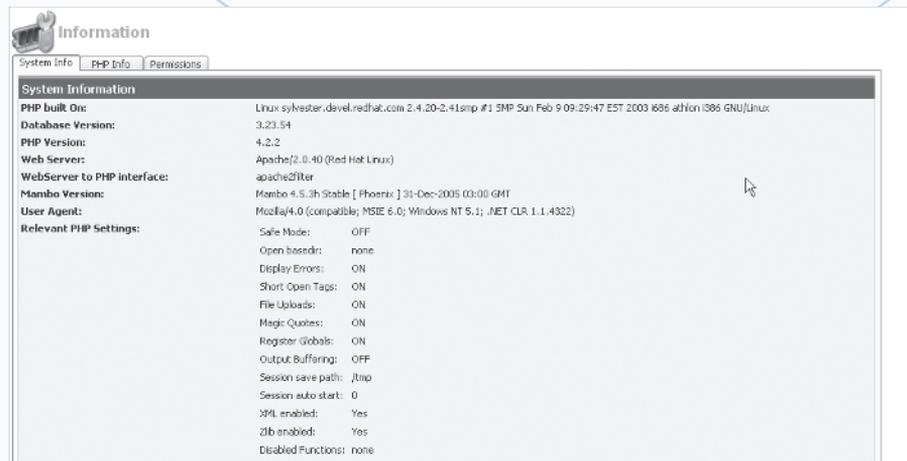
## View System Information

- 1 Click System.
- 2 Click System Information



Alternatively, you can click the Help icon from the main nav and then click System Info to reach the System Information page.

The System Information page loads.



# Take Your Site Offline

**Y**ou can hide your Web site from view by selecting the Site Offline option in the Global Configuration screen. This command is most useful when you are making extensive changes to the site and you do not want to confuse visitors or let them see the work in progress. This feature should also be used while patching the system so that no users are currently using Mambo site resources that are to be updated with the new patch. It is possible that if the site is left online during a patch that some files may not be updated as expected.

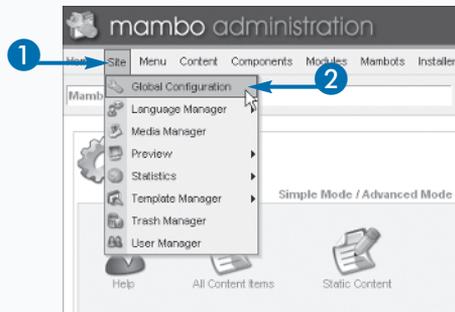
When a site is taken offline by means of the Site Offline command, visitors may still come to the site, but instead of being greeted by the standard home page, they see only a single Web page with a message on it. The system provides a default message, or you can create a custom message.

The effect of taking a site offline is immediate. Site visitors browsing the site will see the site content disappear and a temporary page in its place. Even users who are logged in to the system will find only the temporary page. The immediate effects of this command open up the possibility for unintended side effects. Users who are in the middle of a task may not be able to complete their task. Accordingly, you should use this command with due deference to the users in order to keep disruption to a minimum.

When the time comes to restore the site for the public, you only need to change the state of the Site Offline option and your site immediately becomes accessible again.

## Take Your Site Offline

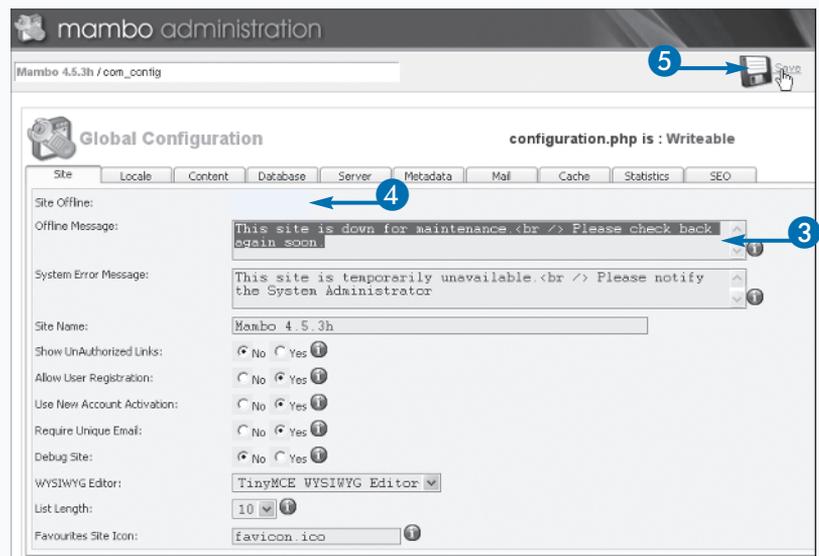
- 1 Click Site.
- 2 Click Global Configuration.



The Global Configuration page loads.

- 3 Type your offline message.
- 4 For the Site Offline option, click Yes.
- 5 Click the Save icon.

The site is now offline and displays the message you entered in Step 3.



# Enable Write Permissions on Files

**Y**ou must enable write permissions on key files and directories to make certain types of changes to the Mambo system. During the installation process, the Mambo installer requires that the permissions on certain directories be set to allow the installer to write to the directories. Once you install the system, you may still need to enable write permissions on some files in order to make changes to those files. For example, you must make the configuration.php file write-enabled if you want to make changes to your Global Configuration settings. Editing template files similarly requires that you set certain files within the template directories to allow the system to write to the files.

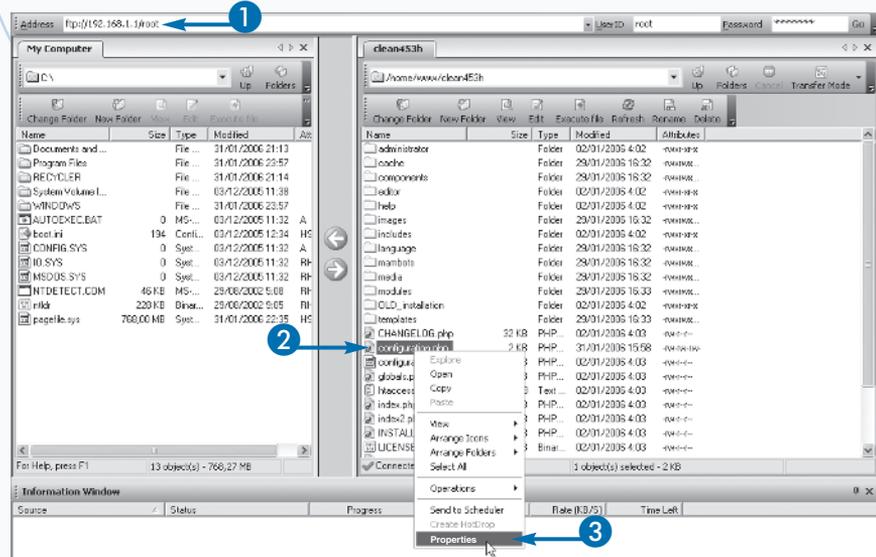
Unfortunately, you cannot change the permissions of files that already exist in the system from inside the Mambo system. You must access the files in another

manner to make the required adjustments. You typically change a file's permissions using an FTP program and the CHMOD command. While some users can perform this task via their Web host's control panel and file manager, the CHMOD command is the standard approach to managing file permissions and is explained in this section.

For new files, you can use the Global Configuration Manager to enable Mambo to set file permissions automatically; this process is explained in Chapter 2. As noted in Chapter 2, the use of a blanket approach to setting file permissions is a potential security risk. The best practice is to execute the necessary changes on a case-by-case basis, and when you have finished making your changes to the file, you should remove the write permissions, unless they are necessary for system functions.

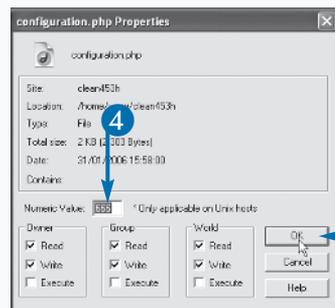
## Enable Write Permissions on Files

- 1 Access your site via FTP.
- 2 Select the file you want to modify.
- 3 View Properties.

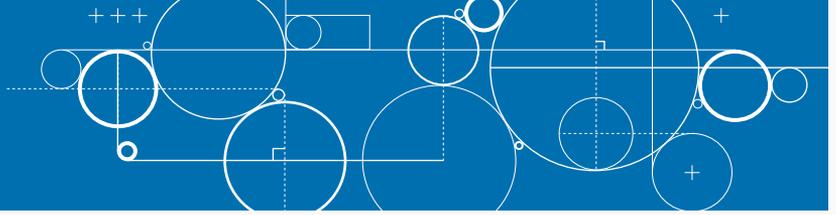


The Properties window displays permissions.

- 4 Change the numerical value to **777**.
- 5 Click OK.



# The Right Tools for the Job



**M**ambo is not dependent on a particular toolset and allows you to work with virtually anything you choose. Still, some tools do work

better than others and, perhaps more importantly, some tools make administering the site faster and easier.

## Browser

You can view the admin system of a Mambo Web site with any browser. However, certain tools, particularly the WYSIWYG editor, perform best with either the Microsoft Internet Explorer browser or the Mozilla Firefox browser. Accordingly, for admin purposes, only those browsers are recommended. Note that this has nothing to do with the front end of the Web site. Visitors to a Mambo site can still enjoy the site equally well on any browser or system.

Regardless of whether you choose IE or Firefox, you should always try to have a copy of other popular browsers on your machine so that you can check the display of the front end of your site from browser to browser. If you want to serve the broadest sample of viewers, you should always check the site on IE, Firefox, Safari, and Opera.

## FTP Client

An FTP client is an optional tool, but one that sometimes comes in handy. FTP is a method of moving files back and forth between your local computer and the server. An FTP client is a program that uses FTP to move files. Some people may need FTP to move the Mambo installation files to their server. Other people will find Mambo already installed by their Web host or the Web developer. Even in the latter situation, having an FTP client at your disposal can make certain tasks simpler or faster. For example, you can move a large number of image files to your server faster with FTP than with the Mambo Media Manager. An FTP client is also useful for managing file permissions, as discussed in the earlier section “Enable Write Permissions on Files.”

There is a wide variety of FTP clients available. While this book uses WS FTP Pro for the examples in this book, virtually any client can perform the same tasks.

## HTML Editor

You do not need an HTML editor to manage content in Mambo; the WYSIWYG editor handles all of the formatting for you. HTML skills, however, are very useful if you want to work on content offline. With an HTML editor, you can work on a Content Item offline and then move the item, complete with HTML tags, into the content editor window. This approach to content management can save time. If you live in a narrow-bandwidth environment, you will find that working on content offline, rather than editing it on the server, not only saves time, but also much frustration.

Although a new user may find Adobe’s Dreamweaver a bit intimidating, it is an excellent HTML editor. One of the nice options available for Dreamweaver users is the Mambo extension, which you can download from <http://source.mambo-foundation.org>. The extension automates the insertion of module placeholders and generic header materials necessary to build Mambo templates. Although the extension is limited in its capabilities, it can help you create (or convert) Mambo templates and is therefore a timesaver worth investigating.

If you do not know how to use Dreamweaver, you may want to take the time to learn; but if not, stick with your favorite editor.

# Before You Get Started

One of the best things about Mambo is that the system is designed to tolerate reasonable amounts of misuse without faltering. Nonetheless, to avoid problems, there are a few basic principles you should keep in mind while operating a Mambo system. Some of the points

covered in this section are basic ideas that apply to any server-based system, and others are unique to Mambo. All of the points relate to good work habits, and you cannot go wrong by respecting these simple rules.

## Be Secure

To preserve your security, observe the following practices:

- Do not disclose your password to others.
- Always log out when you walk away from the computer — if you do not, others can use your open access to make changes to the system, including creating a new username and password for themselves, or locking you out of the system!
- Do not allow the browser to remember the username and password for you, unless the computer is secure and restricted to only your access.
- When you finish working, always log off.
- Subscribe to the Mambo Security Announcements mailing list to stay updated of security issues. To join the list, send an e-mail to [security-notification@mambo-foundation.org](mailto:security-notification@mambo-foundation.org).

## Stay in Step

Mambo is a dynamic Open Source project, and that means new versions are released periodically. Sometimes new releases are optional. In other cases, a new release may be a patch or a response to a security vulnerability. Best practice is to stay in step with the most current version of the software. Periodically visit the official Mambo sites for new developments.

## When in Doubt, Back it Up!

Back up your system periodically. For most users, backing up the database is sufficient. Mambo provides a backup mechanism in the default installation — use it regularly and keep the copies of the backup safe. Users who make extensive modifications to files in the Mambo system may want to maintain a full backup, or at least copies of all files they have modified. Backups of changed files can also make your life easier when the time comes to upgrade your Mambo site to a new version.

## Keep it Clean

Cutting and pasting text into Mambo directly from Microsoft Word is not recommended. Word includes a wide range of unnecessary HTML tags. If you cut and paste directly from Word, unnecessary code pastes with it. The bloated Word text can increase page size significantly — sometimes by up to 200 percent! So even though pasted Word text retains most of its formatting, it does so at the cost of page size. Your site will slow down and be harder to maintain in the future.

There are three solutions:

- Cut the text from the Word document, and then paste it into Notepad or another very basic text editor. Doing so strips out all the formatting. Next, cut the text from the Notepad document and paste into Mambo. This cleans the code. You can format the text using the Mambo formatting commands.
- Format your text using an external HTML editor, then move the HTML code as a whole into the editor window.
- Some WYSIWYG editors include a “Clean Up Word HTML” button. If you cut and paste from Word, you can then highlight the text and click the button to execute an automatic clean up. This generally works pretty well.