

Manual for BwPostman

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**This book covers the use of BwPostman for
Joomla!®-powered web sites.**

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Introduction

BwPostman is a complete and extensive newsletter extension for Joomla!® 2.5.16 and Joomla!® 3.3.

BwPostman main features:

- You can compose the content of the newsletter with free text and articles that are already written in Joomla!®.
- The newsletters can be personalized.
- In BwPostman you can create as many mailing lists as you want and so you can get different mailing lists for every thinkable constellation of recipients (guests, registered users, issue...).
- BwPostman always generates the newsletter in HTML and in text format.
- The campaign manager in BwPostman enables you to combine newsletters to a campaign that belongs together.
- You can import subscribers from a CSV- or XML-file. So you can e.g. export the address book from a mail program and import it in BwPostman. Export of subscribers is also possible.
- You can archive subscribers, newsletters, mailing lists and campaigns and restore it from the archive.
- A special property is the possibility to adjust, how many mails will be sent at once.
- Sending of an attachment with the newsletter.
- For the front-end predefined CSS styles may be overridden by self-defined CSS file.
- User-defined texts for activation mail and legal informations.
- Webmaster or another person may be informed per mail at each confirmation.
- Author and created date of articles of Joomla!® may be deselected in settings.
- Arrangements against subscriptions by robots with a simple maths task or as user defined question, adjustable in settings.
- Tables of BwPostman can be saved and restored.

- Tables of BwPostman can be checked and repaired.
- Migration to another Joomla!® Installation is possible conditionally.

The download of the whole package includes the basic component and also a module for registration for the front-end to the newsletter system. The overall package has to be unzipped first. Then the single parts of BwPostman can be installed as usual by the installer of Joomla!®.

This manual is arranged in such a way, that you are able to learn the use of BwPostman step by step and you are able to create your first newsletter as soon as possible. For that reason I suggest to practise the use of BwPostman parallel to reading this manual.

The main idea of BwPostman is based on the component mkPostman, which is no longer supported and maintained by their developers after Joomla!® 1.5.

In comparison to the predecessors BwPostman in version 1.0.1 is mainly rewritten. The code is adapted to the new API, reduced and many internal processes are simplified.

Suggested Proceeding

BwPostman must be installed and configured, before you can use the component. Then you need one or more mailing lists, that keeps the subscribers. It is very useful to create some test recipients. They can be used to learn about the functionality of BwPostman. Next you can test the CSS entered in the options without sending these tests to a real mailing list. Later you can use test recipients to test the single newsletter, before it is sent to the subscribers.

Then the first newsletter will be created and sent.

Finally I will write about the special features BwPostman contains:

- Import and export recipients
- Campaigns
- Archiving of recipients, mailing-lists, newsletters and campaigns
- Adjustments to the look in front-end
- Maintenance

Further Help

If there are questions or problems occur, fast help in English and German you get at the Forum of BwPostman:

<http://www.boldt-webservice.de/en/forum-en/bwpostman.html>

Since version 1.0.1 of BwPostman there is a link **Help** in the toolbar, which opens a new browser window with the forum of BwPostman. Furthermore there is a button in the main view of BwPostman to the forum. A click to the button opens a new browser window or browser tab – depending on browser settings – with the forum of BwPostman.

Safety Instructions

BwPostman is tested on many Joomla!®-installations without problems. Nevertheless I can't exclude that something goes wrong during installation. Especially the „interplay“ of different extensions can't be estimated fully and negative effects can't be excluded.

Therefore:

I suggest to always backup the complete system (database and files) before you make changes to your Joomla!® installation (installation or update of an extension)! For this task the free version of [Akeeba Backup](#) e.g. is suitable.

Since BwPostman 1.0.1 the possibility exists at maintenance to save and restore the tables of BwPostman directly from BwPostman. Furthermore since this version there will be created a backup file of the tables of BwPostman in the temp folder of Joomla!® at each update and the tables were checked on consistency. Particulars in chapter Update.

Testing an unknown extension – this is also true for BwPostman – it is highly advised not to do at a life-system.

Installation and Update

Please read the safety instructions ahead before!

Installation

Download Packages

Before you can install BwPostman, the installation package has to be downloaded. At <http://www.boldt-webservice.de/downloads/bwpostman.html> you will find the downloads for the overall package as well as the single packages for the component and the module. Also you find there the download for this manual. The current stable version is always at the top of the list.

The overall package contains the component, the module and the manual in German and English. Therefore the overall package must be unzipped before you are able to install.

The overall package is named **BwPostman.versionnummer.UNZIP_FIRST.zip**, the package for the component is named **com_bwpostman.version_number.zip** and the package for the module is named **mod_bwpostman.version_number.zip**.

Unzip the overall package to any desired place, e.g. the desktop. The resulting single packages may be installed as they are.

Installing the Component

The installation of BwPostman works like all other Joomla!®-components: Log in into the back-end. Then in the back-end go to **Extensions → Extension Manager**.

In tab (Joomla!® 2.5: section) **Upload Package File** click at **Browse...**, select the file **com_bwpostman.version_number.zip** and click at **Upload & Install** – ready.

Installing the Module

In tab (Joomla!® 2.5: section) **Upload Package File** click at **Browse...**, select the file **mod_bwpostman.version_number.zip** and click at **Upload & Install** – ready.

Alternative Installation

Sometimes the installation won't work as described. Then you can try this alternative way: As explained above download the overall package and unzip it locally. Then unzip the single packages locally also.

In the temporary folder of your web server create a new folder **com_bwpostman** or **mod_bwpostman** and copy the unzipped files in this folder. Copying to web server works comfortably via Filezilla. After that attach **/com_bwpostman** or **/mod_bwpostman** to the entered path in Joomla!® installer and click at **Install** in the same row.

In all three cases the installation finished after a few seconds and Joomla!® confirm the installation with a success message.

Update

Please read the safety instructions ahead before!

BwPostman serves the automatic update function in Joomla!®. That means, that it will be shown in the back-end as soon as a new version of BwPostman component or module is available. When the Joomla!®-integrated plugin **Quick Icon - Joomla!® Update Notification** is activated, you can see this when you enter back-end and the control panel will be shown. A click at the button **Updates are available** will show you the available updates, even so the updates for BwPostman.

When the plugin is not activated, you can look for updates in the back-end in the menu **Extensions → Extension Manager** in sub menu (Joomla!® 2.5: at the tab) **Update** (clear cache before if necessary) and install it.

Hint:

Since version 1.0.1 after each update the table structure of BwPostman tables will be checked and repaired if necessary. Before that a backup file of the BwPostman tables is created in the temp folder of Joomla!®, that means directly on the server. Where this exactly is, you will find in Joomla!® at **System** (in Joomla!® 2.5: Site) → **Global Configuration → Server**.

The name of the backup file is *BwPostman_Tables_Server_<date>_<time>.xml*, where <date> is the actual date of the backup in the format yyyy_mm_dd, <time> is the time

of the backup in the format hh_mm. When the file is created at July, 31 2014 at 08:13 AM, then the backup file is named

BwPostman_Tables_Server_2014_07_31_08_13.xml

If the check of the tables was successful, the file may be deleted. You should do that from time to time for that the temp folder is not claimed to much from these automatic backup files. You also may download these backups and keep it locally.

Configuration

After installation BwPostman must be configured. To do so you click in the top right corner of **Components** → **BwPostman** at the button **Options** in the back-end of your Joomla!® installation. Or you click at the button **Basic settings** in the main view of BwPostman. The options are only available in the main view or in the maintenance.

The options are divided in five sections: **Basic Settings**, **Registration**, **Activation**, **Newsletter** and **Permissions**. For all options there are tool-tips.

Basic Settings

Sender's name

Sender's email

Reply-to-email

With the values entered here the fields **Sender's name**, **Sender's email** or **Reply to email** of each newsletter will be preallocated. They may be overwritten in each newsletter individually. They are predefined with the values of your Joomla!® configuration.

If the fields **Sender's name**, **Sender's email** or **Reply to email** remain empty they will be filled automatically with the data of your Joomla!® configuration. But I suggest to enter these data to become independent from changes in Joomla!® core.

Legal Infos

Here you can set the Infos that are required by law.

This text appears directly above the links to edit or cancel the subscription in the newsletter (p class=footer-inner).

Number of newsletters per step

Next you can enter how many newsletters will be sent at once. Some providers don't like it, if you want to send too many mails at once. Thus BwPostman never sends all newsletters concurrently except the entered value is higher than the number of recipients for this newsletter. The default value is 100.

Registration

Introduction text

In this field you can enter a text, which will be shown at the front-end in the registration form of component and module and in the subscription manager as introduction.

Display form field name and first name

Here you set, whether the fields for last name and/or first name should be shown in the registration form and in the edit form of the subscription. This makes sense if you want to personalize your newsletter.

Name or first name is obligation

Here you set, whether first name or last name (or both) are obligatory. If you chose yes, then the appropriate field will be shown in the registration form and the edit form of the subscription, even if it is disabled in the option field above.

Show the mail format selection

Here you define whether the email format shall be shown in the registration form or not. This setting is applies to both, component and module.

Email format

Here you set the default email format the newsletter will be sent out, when the subscriber has not selected anything. This is the predefined setting for both registration forms, component and module.

Display disclaimer

In the registration form you can display a link to a disclaimer. In this case the subscriber has to accept the disclaimer before sending the registration. In some countries a disclaimer is useful, in Germany it is possibly harmful.

But you may use it as a manner of terms of use for the newsletter, what you may do with the email address you got, or, or, or. For something, the subscriber has to give his okay.

Link target**URL for the disclaimer****Article****Menu item**

Here you set, where BwPostman will find the disclaimer to use. In the field **URL for the disclaimer** you enter an **URL** as source for the disclaimer. Then you have to select **URL** as **Link target**.

At **article** you are able to select an article of Joomla!®. Then you have to select **Article** as **Link target**.

At last you may use a menu item of Joomla!®. In this case the **Link target** is **Menu item**.

Open disclaimer in current window

Here you set, if the disclaimer will be shown in the current window/tab of the browser or in a new one.

Secure registration form

Here you set, if the registration form will be secured against robots. This protection will help to get less subscriptions by robots and less error mails because of undeliverable activation mails. Possible values are **No**, **Question** or **Captcha**.

The **Question** you may select by yourself and should not be too complicated. It will be set in the fields **Question** and **Answer**.

Examples:

- How many legs has a horse? (1, 2, ...)
- Which colour has a red car?

Captcha is a little Captcha driven maths task.

Question**Answer**

If **Question** is set in **Secure registration form**, then you have to fill these fields by your question and its answer. The question appears in registration form, the answer is needed by evaluation and will not be shown.

Activation

Title for Activation

The activation mail always will be sent personalized. Here you set, how to approach the subscriber, e.g. **Hello** or **Hello Mr./Mrs.** Last one only make sense, if last name, first name or both are obligatory.

Text for Activation

This is the text that appears after the salutation.

After this text the link to activation appears. It is useful to tell the subscriber, that he has to activate his subscription by clicking the link below. You may amplify this text by your wishes.

If there is nothing entered here, the link for activation will be shown directly after the salutation. Does the subscriber knows, what he has to do? No? Therefore: Enter **Text for Activation!**

Text Agreement

In some countries it is necessary by law to tell the subscriber some more informations, that haven't to appear in each mail. Here you may enter these informations. Or further informations by your own.

This text appears after the link for activation.

Activation also to webmaster

If you want to be kept current, how the subscriptions grow up, when and who someone subscribed a mailing list, then you should switch on **Activation also to webmaster**. This notification contains all details of registration, beneath first name and last name the date, time and IP of registration and confirmation.

Sender name

Here you enter the sender name, that will be used in the notification mail.

Mail address of webmaster

Here you enter the mail address, to which the notification mail will be sent. That may be the webmaster or another person, that shall be informed, that a new subscriber has activated his subscription.

Newsletter

Use CSS for HTML newsletters

Here you set, whether BwPostman uses consistent CSS for all newsletters (e.g. for background, banner, logo,...).

The rendering of the HTML newsletter depends on the mail clients the subscribers use. You should not use HTML Tags and CSS styles and values, that are too complicated.

In the field **CSS for HTML newsletters** these styles will be entered. Generally valid CSS syntax will be expected. For this you need basic knowledge in HTML and CSS.

CSS for HTML newsletters

Enter here the CSS styles for the newsletter. Generally valid CSS syntax will be expected. It will be used following classes, the grey-shaded styles will be used on each single article, the paragraph **p class=nl-intro** may be used for personalization:

html/body

#

##

Logo

Here you can select an image for logo or banner for the header of your newsletter. The file must settle in the Joomla!®-own media directory (/images) or a subdirectory of the media directory. The dialogue used to select the logo is that one Joomla!® uses. In this dialogue you may upload the logo to the server, if it is not already there.

Boldt Webservice

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Websites, die verkaufen!

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D-73079 Sülßen

[http://www.boldt-webservice.de/en/
forum@boldt-webservice.de](http://www.boldt-webservice.de/en/forum@boldt-webservice.de)

Show author

Show created date

Here you may set, if the author or the created date of the Joomla!® article is shown in the newsletter or not.

Permissions

In permissions you set, who may do what in back-end of BwPostman.

The rights **Configure**, **Administration access**, **Create**, **Edit**, **Modify state**, **Edit self-created contents** and **Delete** correlate to them you know in Joomla!®.

To BwPostman there are added the rights for **Send newsletter**, **Archive** and **Restore**. I think, the denotations of this rights are self-explaining.

The Back-end

The back-end of BwPostman has a main view, also called main menu, that may be used as a starting point for all actions that are possible in BwPostman. It contains buttons for all overviews together with buttons to create newsletters, subscribers, test-recipients, campaigns or mailing lists. There are also buttons to reach options, the maintenance and the forum of BwPostman. At the right you find informative statistics.

Before the first newsletter can be created, there must exist at least one mailing list. It is possible to use separate lists for different topics and/or groups of recipients.

Creating Mailing Lists

Mailing lists will be created in the main menu of BwPostman.

Via menu entry **Mailing lists** you get an overview about already created mailing lists.

A new mailing list will be created either in the main menu of BwPostman with the button **Add mailing list** or in the overview of the mailing lists with the button **New** in the toolbar.

Each mailing list needs a title/name and a description. Both can be displayed in the front-end.

In the select list **access level** you can determine, who can subscribe to this mailing list. When a subscriber is not allowed to subscribe to this mailing list, then it will not be shown in the select list in the front-end.

In order to be able to select the mailing list in the front-end, it **must** be published. This can be done in the details (mode **Edit**) of the mailing list. But also a click to the symbol in the column **Published** in the overview of the mailing lists switches the state.

The mailing list can be edited by clicking at the title in the overview of the mailing lists or while checking the check box in front of the title and clicking at the button **Edit** in the toolbar.

Hint:

A user can't select unpublished mailing lists in the front-end, but in the back-end an administrator or a person with appropriate rights can allocate each user to this mailing lists. In this way you can enable access to this mailing lists to "hand selected" users.

Archived mailing lists will **not** be displayed in the overview!

Enter Subscribers and Test-Recipients

Normally subscribers subscribe to the mailing lists by themselves. But there are cases to create a subscriber in the back-end by webmaster. Because of that you got this possibility in the back-end. Test-recipients only may be created in back-end.

How we just learned at the mailing lists, subscribers can be created in the main menu of BwPostman with the button **Add subscriber** or in the overview of the subscribers with the button **New** at the tabs **Confirmed subscribers** and **Unconfirmed subscribers**.

Test recipients will be created in the main menu of BwPostman with the button **Add Test-Recipient** or in the overview of the subscribers in the tab **Test-Recipients** with the button **New**.

Last name and **first name** must be entered, when it is set to obligatory in the options of BwPostman. There also is no exception in the back-end!

It must be entered at least a **mail address** for the subscriber. Indeed, BwPostman has to know where to send the newsletter.

The mail format can be selected at **Format** and is predefined with the value from the options of BwPostman.

The field **Confirm** only appears when you create a new subscriber. At test recipients and editing a subscriber it is not displayed.

To Confirm regard the following:

The subscriber gets an automatic mail, that contains a link, with that the subscriber has to confirm his subscription (Double-Opt-In), when the field **Confirm** is set to **unconfirmed**. If you want to avoid legal difficulties (sure for Germany), then you shouldn't select confirmed by yourself but you should let confirm the subscription by subscriber!

The available mailing lists will be shown below. On the left you find the mailing lists, that ever can be selected in the front-end in general. The state of this mailing lists is **Public** and they are published.

In the middle there are mailing lists, that only specific user groups may subscribe to in the front-end. These mailing lists are published basically and can be subscribed at front-end, but not for everyone.

At the right there are mailing lists, that only can be assigned in the back-end. These are the mailing lists, that are unpublished, nevertheless to which user group they are assigned to.

Like noted above someone with appropriate access to the back-end may assign the subscriber to that mailing lists, that are not shown in front-end, for whatever reasons ever.

While the subscriber has not confirmed his subscription, he will be displayed in the overview at the tab **Unconfirmed subscribers**. When the subscription is confirmed, the entry moves to the list **Confirmed subscribers**.

Now something about the rights of the subscribers to select mailing lists:

Guests, that means user, that have no user account in Joomla!®, only are able to register to public mailing lists (access level public). When an user has an account in Joomla!®, then he is able to register to mailing lists, that needs higher permissions – depending on the specification of mailing list and his access level in Joomla!®. In the back-end you can assign each subscriber to all mailing lists you want independent of the predefined access levels.

Archived subscribers and test recipients will **not** be displayed in the overview!

At the end of this chapter some helpful hints:

Per mail address it is only possible to create one subscriber. But for the same mail address you can create two test recipients, one test recipient for each mail format. With this a mail address may occur three times in the overviews of the subscribers at maximum.

If a subscriber is added, BwPostman checks back whether this mail address perhaps exists at a registered Joomla!® user. If so, then the corresponding ID will be stored at the subscriber and the subscriber – if he is logged in – gets offered the mailing lists to subscribe, that are available for his access level.

Creating or Editing Newsletters

A newsletter is also created in the main menu of BwPostman. And as usual there are two possibilities, too. Either with the button **Add newsletter** directly in the main menu or from the overview of the newsletters (button **Newsletter**) in the tab **Unsent newsletters** with the button **New** at top.

A newsletter can be created by copying an already created newsletter. Either unsent and sent newsletters may be copied.

To copy a newsletter click at the button **Copy** in the toolbar. The copy appears in the tab **Unsent newsletters** in the overview, even if you copied a sent newsletter. A click on the subject of the newsletter or select the checkbox in front of the row and a click to **Edit** on top on opens the newsletter.

Creating newsletters will be processed in five steps. This will be symbolized with five tabs. Creating a new newsletter or modifying an existing newsletter always begins at tab **General information**. Within a Joomla!® session BwPostman reminds the last used tab of each edited newsletter. When editing this newsletter again in this session, BwPostman opens the newsletter with the last used tab.

Tab **General Information**

Sender's name, **Sender's email** and **Reply to email** were taken automatically from options entries of BwPostman, but they may be overwritten, too. Then you enter the subject for the newsletter. There is nothing without subject.

Next you may select an attachment to send with the newsletter. The dialogue to select the attachment is the same one Joomla!® uses. This means, that you may upload the desired attachment to the server if it is not there.

Right-hand you find further informations to the newsletter.

When you already have created campaigns, then you can select whether and – if yes – to which campaign the newsletter belongs to.

Subsequently you select to whom the newsletter shall be sent: To one or more certain mailing lists and/or to one or more user groups of Joomla!®. You may select multiple entries from the select lists. It also is possible to select entries from the select list for the mailing lists **and** for the user groups of Joomla!® contemporary.

Here, too, the mailing lists are divided into three sections: At the left the mailing lists, that may be selected in front-end ever, in the middle the mailing lists, that only may be selected by designated subscribers and beside at right are the mailing lists, that only can be assigned in back-end. At the far right the user groups created in Joomla!® are selectable.

Finally you select if you want to use articles from Joomla!®. To do so make a double click at the desired article of Joomla!® in the select list **Available website contents** at right

or mark the desired article in the select list and click the button with the left arrow between the two select lists. The selected article moves from the right to the left select list ***Selected website contents*** and disappears in the right list, so you can't select him twice accidentally. Double content isn't very pretty.

If you were in error and you don't want a specific article already selected for your newsletter, then select it in the left select list and click at the right arrow. It moves back to the right select list and will be shown afterwards at the bottom of the select list. A double-click to the unwanted article does the same.

Hint:

You can crate a newsletter only based on articles from Joomla!®, you can enter a free text or mix both.

The current working state always can be saved by clicking the button ***Save***, if the mandatory fields are filled.

Hint:

If content exists in one of the tabs ***HTML Newsletter*** or ***Text Newsletter*** and then there changes were made to ***Selected website contents*** in the tab ***General Information***, then a confirmation question occurs while clicking on another tab to check if the already selected contents in the HTML and Text version shall be overwritten. ***OK*** takes the changes, ***Cancel*** discards them. These changes only are finally saved, if the newsletter is stored by clicking to ***Save*** or ***Save & Close***. ***Close*** or ***Cancel*** discards the changes.

Tab ***HTML newsletter***

In the second step you now are able to edit the content of the newsletter in the HTML format. For that the editor selected as default in Joomla!® is used to let you work in your familiar environment.

Have I to write much about here? I think no. Everyone knows best at himself/herself, what he/she wants to communicate in the newsletter.

Only one:

The personalisation will be integrated at this step. If you want to address your reader personally, then this will be made at this tab. To do so we asked for last name and/or first name at registration, didn't we?

Personalisation

For the first name you take the code [FIRSTNAME], the last name will be coded with [LASTNAME] and the full name containing first name and last name with [FULLNAME]. You don't have to memorize this because this will be shown left to the editor. Marking code here, copy and paste works well with Firefox.

Upper cases **and** square brackets belongs to the code!

Tab *Text newsletter*

Like you are able to adapt the content of the HTML newsletter, you may do this for the text newsletter. As you know it is not possible to embed images e.g. to the text version of the newsletter, which the article of Joomla!® may contain. Such things should be controlled.

The personalisation works exactly like described in the chapter before.

Tab *Preview*

In the preview you get a first impression of how the newsletter will look like to the receiver. But you can't see personalized data at this step, because they will be applied just before sending. (Which name of a mailing list, that possibly contains thousands of entries, should the preview show?)

The preview is by the way a bit of browser-dependent. At some CSS styles you could see some differences in the HTML newsletter (like they may occur at websites and mail clients in general).

Tab *Send*

The tab ***Send newsletter*** again is divided into two parts. The upper part is for the real sending of newsletters, the lower part for sending test newsletters.

Personally, I prefer first to send my newsletters to the test recipients to be sure that all looks like I want to and there slipped in no orthographic mistakes.

It is suggested to create different test recipients for the most usual mail clients, particularly if you use some special CSS styles.

The real sending of the newsletters will be launched at this tab, too. Again here you can set, how many mails will be send per step. e.g., if you have 500 subscribers for this mail-

ing list and the value entered is at the (default) value 100, then BwPostman creates 5 queues with each 100 receivers, that will be processed subsequently.

You also may set, if the sending of the newsletter shall take place to unconfirmed subscribers, too.

With a click to one of the buttons **Send newsletter** or **Send test newsletter** (or also to **Send** in the list of newsletters), the newsletter will be personalized for each recipient, delivered to a queue and processed in the queue. While doing this, a popup occurs, where you can see, how the single recipients will be processed.

Tab Queue

Once the queue is built, the open popup will close and you touch down at the overview of the newsletters. While the queues are not completely processed, you will see a third tab named **Queue** beside the tabs **Unsent newsletters** and **Sent newsletters**.

Normally the queue will be handled within seconds. Thus the tab **Queue** only occurs, if the newsletter can't be sent because of technical reasons. May be, the configuration for mailing in Joomla!® is improper (**System** (in Joomla!® 2.5 Site) → **Configuration** → **Server**, section **Mailing**) or the server, that is responsible for sending newsletters – more precisely sending mails within Joomla!® - is not reachable.

If there are other reasons responsible, that a newsletter can not be delivered, then it doesn't matter BwPostman or Joomla!® but the mail server, that is entered in the configuration of Joomla!®. If the mailbox quota exceeds or the recipient may not be found, then you won't see this in the queue!

Delivering a newsletter will be tried twice for a recipient, then BwPostman tries the next recipient. A higher number of trials doesn't make sense, because if there are technical problems, they won't be corrected as shortly, that a higher number of trials will help.

When the technical problems are removed, then the queue can be executed anew with a click to the button **Continue sending**. Before doing so, you have to reset sending attempts with the button **Reset sending attempts**.

Also you may empty the queue with the button **Clear queue**.

Caution:

A newsletter, that once reached the queue, considers as sent for BwPostman, even delivering was not possible due to technical reasons!

Button *Send*

Newsletters may be sent directly from the list of unsent newsletters. To do so, only select the desired newsletter by clicking to the checkbox in front of the subject and click to the button ***Send*** in the toolbar. But it is not possible to send more than one newsletter at once. If there are selected multiple newsletters to send, BwPostman only take the first selected newsletter to send, because:

After the click to ***Send*** the newsletter will be opened to edit and BwPostman immediately shows the tab ***Send newsletter***. Further procedure is like described in previous chapter ***Tab Send newsletter***.

Sent newsletters

Is the newsletter sent it moves from the list of unsent newsletters to the list of the sent newsletters. In this list you may take a look at the newsletter, but changes are no longer possible. A click to ***HTML Newsletter*** opens the HTML version in a window, a click to ***Text Newsletter*** the text version.

Here you can publish the sent newsletters to be able to show them in the front-end. An unpublished newsletter will not be shown in the front-end.

Default status after sending is unpublished.

Creating Menu Entries For The Front-end

For menu items for BwPostman you may create an own menu for the front-end or only add single menu entries to an existing menu. To create some menu entries is recommended, if you want to enable your visitors to look at the already sent newsletters on your website or to edit the subscription. Also for the registration you may show a separate site. However this usually will be done by the module that will be shown at a module position in the used template and may always be available, while the registration form of the component only appears after a click to a menu item.

For menu entries you may select:

- Newsletter registration
- Edit newsletter subscription
- Published newsletters (overview)

- Published newsletters (single view)

The procedure is as usual in Joomla!®:

In the back-end add further menu entries to an existing menu or create a new menu with the desired menu entries.

The Front-end

The Front-end usually shows the module of BwPostman at a module position to enable the visitors to subscribe to the (several) mailing lists.

As mentioned previously only the mailing lists will be shown here to which the visitor has access to. If only one mailing list is selectable, then the select list will not be shown to save a needless click. Is no mailing list available that the visitor may subscribe to, a warning message is displayed instead.

Here you can show an overview of all newsletters, if a menu entry is created. The titles (subjects) of the newsletters are linked to show the single newsletter. Unpublished newsletters will **not** be displayed in the overview. Newsletters, that were sent to special user groups, only are shown in the list, if the visitor is logged in and his user group matches the appropriate one.

Edit newsletter subscription

Finally you should enable the subscriber to edit or to delete his subscription while visiting the website. For this you also can create a menu entry in the front-end.

Editing the subscription for subscribers without user account in Joomla!® works with Double-Opt-In, too: If the subscriber clicks at this menu entry, it will be asked for his email address. To this address a link will be sent to edit the subscription, provided the subscriber has entered the correct email address. Only clicking this link the subscriber will be conducted to the web page, at that he/she may edit or delete the subscription.

Subscribers with an user account in Joomla!® are able to edit their subscription directly.

Hint:

At the end of each newsletter there is one link to unsubscribe and one to edit the subscription. For Germany this is mandatory! A click to the link **unsubscribe** will be processed immediately, **a confirmation is not provided!**

Advanced Use

Campaigns

Several newsletters, that are build on one another and/or correlate thematically are called campaigns in BwPostman. Campaigns are used e.g. to launch, relaunch or promote a product or a service and in this case have few to do with a common newsletter, that first of all serves for information. Nevertheless the newsletters belonging to campaigns also are displayed in the list of newsletters. Additionally, newsletters of campaigns you can see in the details of the campaign, below after permissions.

Campaigns may be used, but have not to be used.

Import and Export

BwPostman offers the ability to import subscribers. The accepted formats are XML and CSV. You also are able to export your subscribers. The used formats are XML and CSV as well.

To see how the data looks like in the respective formats, demo data are supplied. You will find them in the admin-folder of the component (<path-to-your-Joomla-installation>/administrator/components/com_bwpostman). They are named import_demo.csv and import_demo.xml.

Import Subscribers

You call the import with the button **Import** at the toolbar in the sub-menu **Subscribers** of BwPostman. The button is not visible at test recipients.

First you have to select the format, XML or CSV. Only then the button **Browse...** will be enabled, with that you can select the file to import. When you import a CSV file, then you have to enter the CSV delimiter as field separator and the CSV text separator and whether the file contains the field names in the headline.

For field separator there are available comma, semicolon, tabulator and space. For text separation you can select "no separation", apostrophe and double quote. Text separators are normally not used.

XML files don't need this informations naturally.

With the button **Further** you go to the next view. Here you allocate the data from the file to import (in the right list) to the fields of BwPostman (in the left list). Important here is to match the same order at the left and right. The order of the import fields will be adjusted in the right column. To do so highlight the the name of the data field and click to the button **up** or **down** under the select list.

Also fields, that only exists in one of the select lists, have to be removed. This will be done with the button **Remove** below the corresponding select list.

Then you select the mailing lists, to which the subscribers shall be added. Here, too, the mailing lists are divided into three: At the left the mailing lists that are public, in the middle the mailing lists that only can be subscribed by special user groups and in the right the mailing lists that only can be assigned in back-end by the webmaster or a person with appropriate permissions.

Below you set the default email format that will be allocated to the subscriber in case there is no entry in the committed data. Finally you set, whether the subscriber gets an email to confirm the registration (check box not marked) or to confirm the subscriber while importing.

The import will be processed by clicking the button **Import data**.

Hint:

In BwPostman (like Joomla!®) it is not possible to create one or more subscribers with one and the same email address. But it is possible to create two equal test recipients – one per mail format – and one subscriber with the same mail address.

If the data to import contains one email address multiple times with the same settings (regular subscription, test recipient HTML, test recipient text), then it will be imported only the first set of data of this email address.

If an email address already exists in BwPostman, then all sets of data with this email address will be skipped while importing. In each case of skipping you get a message at end of importing.

Caution:

In countries with mandatory double-opt-in-procedure the handling with automatic confirmation while import possibly is improper! A proper usage may be the import of subscribers from another newsletter system.

Hint:

Mail clients often offers a lot of data fields in their address manager. You principally should restrict the export of the address data to that data fields BwPostman is able to import: last name, first name, mail address and mail format. The field **status** only concerns the internal state of a subscriber in BwPostman and normally only is of interest while importing data, that were exported form BwPostman prior. Status 1 means the subscriber has confirmed his subscription, 0 is an unconfirmed subscription and status 9 means test recipients.

If it is not possible to restrict the data to export from mail client or other program, then I suggest to export the data to CSV. This file can be cleared out by a program, that can handle CSV files. Well done is this by CALC from the OpenOffice-Series (Apache OpenOffice, LibreOffice, ...).

Export Subscribers

You call the export with the button **Export** in the sub-menu **Subscribers** of BwPostman. First you select to export in XML or CSV format. While exporting to CSV you have to enter the delimiter, that separates the fields and which text separator shall be used. The latter is very unusual and therefore the default is set to **No separation**.

For field separator there are available comma, semicolon, tabulator and space. For text separation you can select "no separation", apostrophe and double quote. Text separators are normally not used.

With XML files these informations have no effects.

Next you select, whether confirmed and/or unconfirmed subscribers and/or test recipients will be exported. You also can determine to export only not archived, only archived or all subscribers.

Finally you select the fields to export.

Caution:

You have to remove the fields, that you don't want to export!

With click to **Export data** the export file will be created and saved locally.

Archive and Restore

Archive is exactly that what the name says: To archive something.

In BwPostman you can archive newsletters as well as subscribers as well as mailing lists and even whole campaigns. All, BwPostman has to deal with, you can archive. And all what is archived, can be restored from the archive. But in the archive you can't change anything.

To archive e.g. a newsletter go to the overview of the newsletters (mostly is wanted to archive sent newsletters), mark the select box it front of the row of one or more newsletter(s) to archive and click in the toolbar at the button **Archive**. BwPostman shows a confirmation prompt to surely archive the selected newsletters, that you can answer with **Ok** or **Cancel**.

For restoring you select the appropriate tab in the archive, select the desired newsletter(s) to restore, and click in toolbar at **Restore**.

Archiving mailing lists, subscribers and campaigns works the same. At campaigns there is an additional question, whether the newsletters assigned to the campaign shall be archived or restored, too.

Delete

The archive contains an additional function: It is not possible to delete something in the lists of newsletters, subscribers, campaigns and mailing lists. Deleting only is possible in the archive. Here, too: Mark the desired to delete in the appropriate tab at the select box and click on **Delete** at right top. Here also you have to answer a confirmation prompt. And also an additional question appears at campaigns to delete the assigned newsletters or not, too.

Adjust The Look In The Front-end

To adjust the look of BwPostman to fit your template, ***basic knowledge of CSS and HTML is necessary***. And you should have installed an extension in your browser to inspect the currently displayed page. For Firefox, my preferred browser, there exists a great extension called ***Firebug***. Such an extension also exists for Internet Explorer and in Opera such a function is already implemented.

All elements, that are shown in the front-end, may be addressed individually at least since version 0.9.7 of BwPostman. The exact CSS path to the element you may find easily with above-mentioned extension. Some basic settings of CSS Styles are set in the CSS file delivered with BwPostman. For the component you find this file at

<Joomla-installation-directory>/components/com_bwpostman/assets/css/bwpostman.css

For the module it is the file:

<Joomla-installation-directory>/modules/mod_bwpostman/css/bwpostman.css

You might change the CSS Styles in this files. But that only would reach until the next update of BwPostman, because while updating the file is set back to initial settings.

Another possibility is to set the desired CSS Styles in a CSS file of your template. But alike before there is still the problem, that the changes only last until the next update of the template.

Because of that I implemented a solution on a permanent basis since version 0.9.7 of BwPostman:

Create a file named com_bwpostman.css for the component and one file called mod_bwpostman.css for the module in the CSS directory of the template you use, or copy the delivered ones there. These files will be read from BwPostman after all other CSS files. This means, that the CSS styles set in these files, override all previous read CSS styles.

Thus the path to these CSS files is:

<Joomla-installation-directory>/templates/<your template>/css/

Maintenance

Since version 1.0.1 of BwPostman you have the possibility to save and restore the tables of BwPostman. Additionally these tables can be checked. If errors occur, then they will be repaired automatically. That works very reliable, but a hundred-percentage-guarantee I cannot give.

With this you have the possibility to de-install a totally shot to pieces installation of BwPostman and install BwPostman anew without losing mailing lists, newsletters, campaigns or subscribers.

Therefore this hint, too:

Save your data! This can be done with save tables from BwPostman. The reflection: "*If I do some repair and something goes down in drain, then the fat's in the fire.*" prompted me to code a backup routine. But the best and latest backup will be worth nothing, if I can't restore it in worse case. Furthermore it gave a restore tables, too.

Maintenance is called from main menu of BwPostman or from sub-menu. Beside basic settings, with that BwPostman can be configured and the link to the forum there are three buttons: **Check and repair tables**, **Save tables** and **Restore tables**.

Check and repair tables

With one click to this button the tables were checked by reference to the SQL installation file of the installed version of BwPostman. The result of the check and the repair attempt is shown afterwards in an overview. With the button **Back** in the toolbar you get back to maintenance.

Internally the check works as follows:

First will be checked, if there are all needed tables in place. Missing tables are created. Next will be checked, if there are some tables having BwPostman in their name, but are not needed (e.g. remaining from a previous installed version). These will be deleted if any.

In the next step each table is checked for engine, default character set and primary key and will be corrected if needed.

Following each table will be checked for column names and attributes (also called properties) of the columns. Divergences are corrected, too.

In the second last step the Asset-IDs of the data sets of all tables will be checked. If there is no Asset-ID, there will be an attempt to create one. With a missing Asset-ID it is not possible to delete an item. If creating the Asset-ID fails, then you once have to open the item manually in back-end and save it.

Finally it will be checked, if the entered User-IDs match them of Joomla!® and they will be corrected if needed, too.

Well, this is an attempt to find and correct essential errors as well as not as urgent problems. The essential errors are displayed in red, lesser problems occur in yellow-orange. If such appears in the overview, the result follows right below. Only when the result is red there is an error that cannot be corrected automatically.

Save tables

Backup of tables is suggested from time to time, especially before a check/repair of the tables, nobody knows...

With one click at the button **Save tables** structures and data of the tables are assembled in XML formatted file and a browser window is shown, which asks what to do with this file. It is useful to save the file (locally). Remember well where the file is to find, perhaps it will be needed some time!

Restore tables

Restoring tables won't work with one click:

One click to the button **Restore tables** leads to the view, where you may select the backup file. The click at **Start restore** starts restoring tables to the database.

Caution: With this click all existing tables of BwPostman will be deleted from database and only the backup data are available afterwards!

Immediately after restoring the tables will be checked by above-mentioned manner to ensure, that the structure of the restored tables fits the installed version. Certainly the result is displayed.

With the button **Back** you get back to maintenance.

Also important to know:

Restoring of tables only works with backup files made by BwPostman!

Migration of BwPostman to another Joomla!® Installation?

When you read the previous chapters, you may wonder: Am I able to migrate from one Joomla!® installation to another by ***Save tables*** and ***Restore tables***?

The answer is: Yes, conditionally and if BwPostman is installed at this installation of Joomla!®.

Mailing lists and campaigns are absolutely not the problem. By this reason – among others – there is the check and pacing of stored User-IDs while check and repair tables, if possible.

There are more difficulties with the newsletters. Beneath the HTML version and text version BwPostman stores the IDs of the articles. If the articles of Joomla!® are exactly the same, that means textual and with ID, then there are absolutely no problems. But if content or IDs differ, or content, to that the newsletter possesses an ID, in the new installation have a completely different article, there will be at last a problem editing the unsent newsletters in the new installation.

Its the best to test such things with a Joomla!® installation that is designated to test, before you do it to a production environment.

Warning messages

In particular situations warning messages are displayed in back-end of Joomla!®, caused by BwPostman. These warnings are owed to the fact, that BwPostman works either at Joomla!® 2.5 and Joomla!® 3.3. The core code of both versions of Joomla!® are really very different. I was very willing to catch the differences, that no messages are displayed. But in some cases there is no chance to do so, for that messages are displayed from time to time, especially in Joomla!® 2.5.

The warning messages occur, when

- Joomla!® **Error Reporting** is set to **Maximum** or **Development** at **System** (Joomla!® 2.5: Site) → **Global Configuration** → **Server**
- and/or **display_errors** is set to **ON** in **php.ini** of the server

Appendix

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