Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/08 16:53

After installing and setting up my first slave site (a copy of the master, using the same installation, but a different database prefix), I'm now at an interesting question:

"how do I edit the slave?"

Since the administrator link is an alias to the master administration, I find no way to update anything within the slave site. Am I missing something, or am I trying to use JMS for what it was not intended for? I want to have the slave site use the same installation, but be a different site. Content, menus, template (theme), etc.

ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/08 17:14

If you have replicated the website, you can login as admniistrator of the slave site and manage it directly.

If you have replicated (an not shared anything), this mean that the slave site is independent and just have an initial copy of your master website.

See the video in tutorial.
They will show you how to create fresh slave site, and also replicate one.

Once you will have a slave site, you manage it from it independent back-end (/administrator).

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/08 19:41

---

the reason I eventually copied my master site, is because when I saved my slave site, then updated DNS information, I did not have the joomla installation step. it was merely a directory listing with "cache/" and "config_multisites.php" in it.

I feel like the PDF user manual and the demos are causing me to miss a step.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/08 20:20

If you are using a domain or a sub-domain that have their own directory, then you have to deploy the slave site in this particular directory or you may have a list of files present (without the index.php file).

To know how configure a slave site that also use a JMS template for the replication, maybe the tutorial CP-04 will help you
http://www.jms2win.com/tutorial#jms12x-CP-04

You can also have a look to the other CP-xx video that perhaps will help you see the relationship between the hosting configuration and the JMS slave site directory.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/09 13:50

Thanks for all the help, I'm really enjoying working with JMS.

I now get an error following the tutorials. When I try to make a new slave site, then view the slave site to start the slave installation, I get the error:

"No configuration file found and no installation code available. Exiting..."

the directory has all files except for configuration.php, which seems odd. I'm wondering if something happened during my faulty installation of JMS, or if this is a standard error.

My settings and 'check patches' are all green.

Ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/09 14:48

Dear Riss,

Joomla (not JMS), when it starts, it first check if it found a "configuration.php" files that may not be present when you want to create a fresh joomla website.
When joomla detect that it has no configuration.php file, it tries to search for the "installation" directory to allow its creation.
If it does not find any configuration.php file and no installation directory, this is the messsage that is reported.

So you have correctly identified that "configuration.php" does not exists but it seeems that "installation" directory is also missing.
Check that you have correctly installed the JMS patches that must restore the "installation" directory.

If you have used the tutorial step 9 with a slave site deployed in a specific directory, then you must check that you have the "installation" directory present in the deployed folder.
If the "installation" directory is present, you must check that you have the access to the directory.
You can add the "installation/index.php" in the URL of the slave site to check that you can access it. (Probably NO).

So check that you have access to the slave site installation directory to allow joomla build the "congfiguration.php" file.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/09 16:10

---

access seems fine. all patches show "OK".

the installation directory is a sym link, but I assume that's the way it is supposed to be.

all files are correct, but I still get the error.

installing to the deployment directory creates all files and sym links except for a configuration.php file. :(

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/09 16:34

This is normal that "configuratoin.php" is not created when you want to create a fresh slave site.

The key element here is the "installation" directory that must be accessible.
You have to check if the "installation" symbolic link is created and if you can access it from the browser. (The answer is probably no).
The directory may exists with another owner or the permission does not allow to see it.
So check the "installation" directory to allow creating the "configuration.php" with the "Joomla installation".

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/09 17:58

---

installation sym link is there, pointing correctly, all permissions should make it writeable (I opened it right up, being a test server), and trying the installation dir in a browser just brings me back to the index.php error page of "No configuration file found..."

I'm stumped.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/09 18:05

_____

I know this is a permission issue but it is difficult to tell you where.
I have already seen that sometime the "installation" directory exists and the joomla installation seems not be able to see it and I don't know what could case this permission issue.

All I know is that when you have different owner between the master websites and slave site, this may cause such problem.

Perhaps you can try install the "hello world" to discover the owner that is used by your hosting server (probably apaches) that may be different of the "installation" files.

Perhaps the problem is related to the fact the symbolic links are not followed. (apache Options +FollowSymLinks)

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/10 11:25

_____

I have identified another reason that may cause this problem.

Here it is a procedure to check if you are in a special case.
The problem that I have identified on a hosting server is that the installation/index.php file may not retreive the correct directory path when it is called through a Symbolic Link.
The procedure to detect this case is based on the hello world procedure described in tutorial video 7:

- Copy the "hello.txt" and "hello.php" into the /installation directory.
The hello.txt is just used to allow you checking the URL that you enter in your browser in case where you are not allowed to execute PHP.
- Call the http:///installation/hello.php
Write on a paper the path that is returned by the hello.php
- Repeat the operation with http:///installation/hello.php
If the path returned by the slave site URL installation is identical to the one returned by your master website, you may have a problem related on the way your hosting server follow the symbolic links.

To solve such wrong path returned by the installation, it is possible to ask JMS duplicate or restore an installation directory instead of using a Symbolic Link.
You can do that when you create a JMS template in which you enter a specific file and folder tabs setting.
At the line "installation", replace the Symbolic Link action by an "unzip" action in which you provide the path {root}/administrator/components/com_multisites/patches/installation.tar.gz

{root} must be potentially replaced by your master root directory.
This "unzip" action will restore a specific "installation" directory for the slave site.
The result will be that you will have the correct directory path returned by your hosting server and that

should allow you creating the fresh slave site.
When the installation is completed, you can remove the "installation" directory created in the slave site (only).

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/10 18:13

This is very helpful, and I can confirm the hello.php in both slave and master sites show the same path (also that symlinks seem to be functioning), but now that I'm trying to trick into installing, I don't think I get what may happen.

I have found the installation line and changed it to unzip, but this seems only for installing from a template, which would make a full copy of my master site and make the slave site just a copy. Can I set this unzip possibility without using a template?

Also, just for fun, I tried removing the sym link to the installation folder and copied the joomla installation folder myself to see if this fixed it.... there is an EXACT COPY of the joomla installation folder under my slave site folder instead of a symlink.... same "No configuration file found...." error.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/10 18:29

The other thing I've now tried is to add the AllowSymLink in my apache httpd.conf file, but the current path remains the same in both slave and master.

I've been looking up some symlink documentation on forums to find out how to get my apache install working properly.

I'm pretty sure this is more apache's fault than jms. :)

Thanks for all the help, though. Much appreciated.

ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/10 20:15

It seems that AllowSymLink may not change the result.
I have seen that also for another customer and I don't know which parameters make this symbolic link not processed correctly.

Concerning the installation directory created with a symbolic link, you can delete it manually before deploying the "unzip".

This will create an exact copy of the installation directory.
I have not tried to use the "copy" action due to the directory dependencies.
I have prefered the unzip because I know the result.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/11 20:15

_____

Well, I tried changing the installation to the unzip in a template, then added a new site based on the template. Seemed to work, because the installation dir is now a directory, and not a sym link. Still same error.

I'm pretty sure it must be something going on with my apache installation or something. Sorry to keep on about this. Once I get this running, JMS will solve many of my headaches.

I'll keep on with some research into sym links.

ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/11 20:25

_____

False alarm!

going to the slave site (based on the unzip option) and adding the /installation at the end got me to the install without errors. Went through the steps, made the new db prefix slave1_, and presto! Working!

Can't thank you enough, all that work and I finally got it! Send me a link to your feedback and I'll write a glowing review of the support offered.

Thanks again.

Ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/15 19:08

_____

Thanks again for all your help! I now have multiple slaves up and running, just one last question, probably a silly one.

Since I want the multisites to usually have their own independant templates/mainmenu etc, I'll want to specify how the administrator folder works, yes? Much like how you suggested the istallation folder be a tar file, instead of a symlink.

Currently, the admin folder is set as a sym link. I know this means I'll need to administer each slave site individually, but trust me that this is what I want. Do I set it to unzip, or to copy?

ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/15 19:48

_____

Ross,
It is always better to keep the Symbolic Links because this will simplify your maintenance in case of bug fixes or whatever.
If you unzip an administration directory that is effectivelly possible you will have to replicate yourself the update.
So the maintenance benefit of JMS will be lost because you will have to maintain this directory yourself.

The fact that will will unzip the administration directory will not change the fact that when a slave site will want to install an extension, it will still request that it is installed on the master website before.
The problem will be that you will not be able to use the JMS Tools facility for the extension as it assumes that the PHP code is already present for the extensions (that will not be the case if you create an indepedent administrator directory).

I know that some customers have used this unzip/copy facility and they manage thing themselves.

All I can tell you is to test yourself and discover the limits of such architecture.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/15 20:33

_____

then is there another way, with the standard install to change joomla templates/menu options... basically administer the slave site?

it's installed, it's using an independant db table prefix.... I now just can't figure out how to do anything with it.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/15 21:21

When you create slave site, by default they have independent admnistration.
Therefore their menu, articles, default templates, ... is specific to each slave site.

I don't see the relationship with the objective to unzip the administration directory as this is not related with the DB content (table prefix) where is saved the menu, articles, ...

So explain what you want to do and why you want to unzip the administration directory (php files and folders).

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/16 13:28

What I want to do is access an administrator section to my slave site. Which, I'm gathering, I'm supposed to be able to do, but for whatever reason, my slave site (while working wonderfully) has its administrator's directory symlinked to my master site's administrator directory.

This was why I suggested the unzip, I thought maybe the symlinked admin directory was normal. Is this a setting I missed? I just want to go to my slavesite/administrator and manage my slave site(s).

ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/16 14:44

This is normal that the administration directory is a symbolic link to the master as the concept is to share all the PHP code (files and folders).

When you are in the back-end of a slave site and that you administrate the slave site, you modify the DB content and in a very few cases the files on the disk.
The case where the back-end write files in the administration directory is the case where an extension write its own configuration in a file instead of in the DB (because they still use the Joomla 1.0 way to save the config).

This is not because you have the administrator directory linked that you can not go in the slave back-end (admnistration).
The only thing is that a slave site can not install extensions that are not already installed on the master website.

So this is still not clear why you want a specific unzip of the adminsitrator directory as can with linked

administrator directory manage the back-end of the slave site.

If you just want a tool to deploy a full joomla (unzip) a complete independent joomla that will not allow benefit of the maintenance of a single joomla, then you can put several unziop to do that but you will lose the maintenance benefit because JMS will not do syncrhonisation of the files that you will have unziped.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/16 14:57

_____

All I want is to set the joomla template of the slave site, which seems to be different than my master site, but I can't change that. When I do change it... it changes the template of the master site, and not the slave.

Is there a way to change this other than modifying the joomla database itself?

ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/16 15:56

_____

This is true that you can not install specific themes (templates) for the back-end.
The only possibility is to install in the master website all the possible themes that you want for the back-end .

The feature to allow install specific back-end themes (templates) does not exists as I have already replied to another customer in the forum.
Event if you unzip the "administration" directory, this will not help you as JMS will not give the slave site back-end the autorisation to replace or install the back-end themes (templates).

At the origin, JMS is not designed to have specific back-end themes for each slave site.
You can just select default back-end templates amoung all those installed in the master website.

If you want to do such things this mean that the administration directory can not be a symbolic link and that it should be a physical directory with inside many symbolic link except the one for the templates folder.
In the templates folders you will have to replication (duplicate) a basic set of admin themes.
In addition, you should modify JMS to accept install specific themes for the admin.

So as you have understood, have specific back-end themes is not present in JMS.
You can only have specfiic themes (templates) for the front-end.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/16 17:45

_____

If there is no administration of the slave site, then how do you manipulate the menu/articles?

ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/16 18:06

_____

You have an slave site adminstration.
In your reply you have mentioned the specific case to have specific themes for the administrator.
The fact that you share the administrator themes provided by your master websites does not mean that you can not login as administrator on your slave sites and adminsitrate your slave site.

The only thing is that you can not install is a specific administrator themes (templates).
You can only select default administrator templates amoung the list of themes that you have installed on you master websites.

You can create menu, articles, or whatever with extension that you have autorized in your master wbesite using the themes (templates) that you have pre-installed in your master websites.

The slave sites are limited to what you have installed in your master website.
They can only select adminsitrator themes;
Re-install extension that have been pre-installed on the master websites;
etc ..

The only things that is open is the possibility to install front-end themes when you have selected to create a specific themes folder for your slave sites.
You can also have specific image and media folder for your front end.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/16 19:11

_____

I think this is the problem. I can't seem to login to my slave site as administrator.... it just brings me to my master site administration.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/17 00:30

_____

No this is not true.
Have a look in all the video in the tutorial and you will see that the admin is independent.
When you login in the slave site you have its specific admin.

If you arrive in the master webste, this is perhaps because you have not defined the slave site correctly (wrong domain name).

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/18 13:43

In my slavesite template (where I've now set the installation folder to 'unzip'), the administration folder is set as 'symbolic link'.

This seems important, as I think it's the issue. Should this be set to 'copy' or 'mkdir'? This way I can have an administration for my slave site.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/18 14:09

Really, I don't understand what you are trying to do.

This is normal to have symbolic link on all the folders as the objective of JMS is to SHARE all the files and folders for all the websites.

This is not because you share the files and folders on the disk that you can not administrate your slave sites.
I remember you that the data of each websites if saved in the DB and that each websites has its own DB or at least a specific table prefix (when sharing the same DB).

In each slave site administration you can have your own menu, own content (articles), ... and therefore I don't know why you want to duplicate (clone) the administrator directory.

If you want to duplicate the administrator directory, then you loose all the benefit of JMS as you will have to maintain yourself all the PHP codes of all the instance of joomla.
In this case, this will be moreless in the same case as if you install independent joomla for each websites.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/18 15:22

---

all I'm trying to do is go to the administrator section of my slave site.

but if it automatically goes to the administrative section of my master site, than that's because it's sym linked to the master site, correct?

you menioned that since my slave site administration is goin to my master site administration, then there's something not set correclty in my site. I don't see anything obvious that would explain why I can't access the administration of my slave site.

ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/18 15:42

Apply the procedure as described in the tutorial video.
It is clearly show that you arrive in the back-end (administrator) of the slave site.

If you have applied for example the procedure in tutorial video 9, you should have the installation of a fresh slave site.
If you have received the "joomla installer" for this slave site, this mean that you have correctly defined the slave sites and that you have a back-end that is specific to this slave site.

If you still see the "login form" of the master website, this is because you have not defined the domain name in the list of slave site.
The result will also that you will see the master website in the front-end for this domain.

Values to create a slave site with tutorial video 9 and Symbolic Link allowed are:

Site ID = slave1
Domain = {site_url}/multisites/{site_id}
Deploy directory = {site_dir}

Copy/past those values because they use keyword that will be resolved automatically by JMS.

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/18 15:57

---

hrm. perhaps it's an 'order of operations' thing.

When I set up my first test slave, I didn't click the 'admin' link at the end of the installation process. When I later went to the administration folder, it went automatically to the master administration.

When I set up a second test slave site, I clicked the admin link at the end of the installation, and now the administration section is set up just fine.

Is it merely that it is mandatory to click the admin link (and not the site link) first after installation? Or is it

just my bad luck?

Anyway... I think, if I understand all processes and procedures now, it's working the way I was hoping to use it.

Again, many thanks for quickly responding to all my foibles and silly questions.

ross

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by edwin2win - 2009/09/18 16:09

_____

I don't see which "admin link" you refer.
Is it the standard "admin" button the joomla display at the end of the "joomla installer" ?
If this is this button, I don't understand because normally joomla (not jms) has create the website.

I would like also to know which browser you are using.
I have noticed plenty of bugs in Firefox 3.5.x. They have changed their cache processing and now Firefox 3.5.x has very strange behavior and frequently display wrong page content.

If you are using 3.5.x, perhaps you should restore a FF 3.0.14 (as I did it).

==========

Re:Starting up with multi-sites
Posted by rchapman - 2009/09/29 15:47

_____

Hello Edwin,

Sorry I didn't reply again, but everything was finally resolved and then I was off and away testing and happilly using my new multisites.

The final problem I was having with not having an admin section was because I wasn't putting in the right site URL in the slave setup. Silly me.

Thanks again for all your help and I'm away and good to go.

Ross

==========