



Big Medium 2

The Complete Guide

Global Moxie

Josh Clark

Big Medium 2: The Complete Guide

Josh Clark

Published April 2008. Second edition.

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All credit for Big Medium 2 goes to Ellen, who endured many months of eccentric hours, uneven temper and glassy-eyed distraction during its development. In return, I received more love and support than my impossible behavior deserved.

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Chapter

1

Welcome

The web is an arcane place. For non-technical people, the details of running a website, managing its design and updating its content are elusive, tedious... incomprehensible.

So organizations rely on technology gurus. Like a psychic who somehow communicates with the unseen and unfathomable, the webmaster is the modern medium, channeling content into code, message into markup. Trouble is, this role doesn't make the best use of webmasters' specialized skills. Content authors rely on these web professionals to make even simple edits. Meanwhile, changing business requirements demand endless and exhausting recoding of webpages.

Webmasters need a break; the rest of us need a new "medium."

Big Medium brings simplicity to web publishing

Big Medium is a web-based content-management system that allows you to update your site instantly from anywhere in the world. And it's easy: once a website is configured, anyone with basic word-processing skills and a web browser can add or edit content without touching any HTML. Writers and editors simply cut and paste their text into a form in their browsers, adding images or pullquotes with the click of a button.

Say goodbye to broken links and HTML typos. Big Medium manages all of the links on your site, updating your homepage and section pages every time you add or change pages. And because Big Medium also manages all of the HTML formatting of your pages, the markup behind your site is squeaky clean.

Design updates take minutes, not months

Big Medium's separation of content from design gives you flexibility as well as simplicity. You can change the look and feel of your entire site in minutes, simply by updating your design templates. The templates are easy to create and edit, putting you in complete control of your site's design and layout.

Why stop with one site?

The web is a pretty big medium itself. Companies often have multiple sites to address different audiences. Schools often have individual sites for each department, class or teacher. Nonprofits often have a different

site for each program they administer. Big Medium helps you keep up with it all, managing as many sites as you like on a single server.

Beyond your website

With its news-feed features, Big Medium lets you tap the net's innate grassroots marketing power, allowing you to reach customers and readers even when they aren't visiting your site. Meanwhile, Big Medium's sitemap and tagging features help search engines index your pages and make your site more findable.

Everyone can do what they do best

Everyone on your team has her own password-protected account that determines what she's allowed to do on the site. Authors and editors can manage their own content. Photographers and illustrators can add their own images. Managers and publishers can review content before it's published. And, finally, web professionals can focus on jobs that actually make good use of their skills, creating innovative new designs and applications for your site.

What does Big Medium do?

Simply put, Big Medium manages web content. You edit your content in a web form, and Big Medium spins it into web pages, automatically updating your site with all of the necessary links. Here's a rundown of Big Medium's key features.

Content editing

Browser-based. Big Medium's password-protected web interface lets you edit your site from anywhere in the world. After installing Big Medium on your server, all you need is a browser and an internet connection.

Easy text editing. Big Medium's WYSIWYG ("what you see is what you get") rich-text editor makes editing web pages as easy and familiar as using a word processor. You also have the option to enter your pages in plain text using the intuitive Markdown syntax, or in good-old-fashioned HTML.

Fast, one-step publishing. Enter your text or document into the page editor and Big Medium files the page under the category you select, automatically updating your home page and section pages with links to the page. It's fast and immediate. No more broken links or manual updating of multiple pages every time you want to add something new.

Manage documents, media and podcasts. Adding documents, including audio and video, to your site is easy. These documents become available for immediate download from your site, and audio and video files are automatically added to your site's podcast. Ta da, you're a broadcaster!

Image management and slideshows. Big Medium manages your library of images, automatically sizing your original images to appropriate sizes for page display, thumbnails and slideshows. Any page can feature its own image gallery to showcase your photos, product images, drawings, etc.

Version control. Review the edit history for any page, compare a page's current text to previous versions and, if you like, roll back to a previous version.

Tags. Tag your pages with browsable keywords to help your visitors find similar content.

News feeds and content syndication. Big Medium automatically generates RSS news feeds and podcasts to allow your website visitors to subscribe to your site's updates.

One-click editing. Jump straight into editing from any page of the site with your-eyes-only edit links on the published site.

Layout and design

Custom templates. You control the look and feel. Big Medium uses your custom design templates to manage your site in its own highly unique design. Unlike systems that force you into a cookie-cutter design or a bland three-column layout, Big Medium gives you free reign and can support virtually any HTML design.

Standards-compliant HTML and XHTML. Big Medium produces immaculate markup, and CSS-based layouts are fully supported. Not sure what all of this alphabet soup means? Never fear, Big Medium takes care of these technical details for you and does it the "right" way, building your pages on a solid technical foundation.

WYSIWYG style editor. Even if you don't know HTML or CSS, Big Medium's style editor lets you tweak the fonts, colors and layout of your site with a live preview to see the changes before you apply them.

Instant design makeovers. Load your new design template, and the site's entire look changes instantly.

Flexible preferences. Big Medium offers a wide range of preferences to let you customize exactly how it formats your site's pages. These preferences can be customized down to the category or subsection level, giving you fine-grained control over every section of your site.

Site management

Manage multiple sites. A single installation of Big Medium can manage an unlimited number of sites on your server, each with its own independent design and content.

Team collaboration. Allow an unlimited number of contributors to add, edit and publish content. Big Medium lets you register accounts for every member of your team, setting their access privileges to one of five levels of role-based permissions. Big Medium's basic version control makes it easy to share and review changes.

Lightweight workflow. Follow your site content through the editorial process from *draft* to *edit* to *ready* to *published*. Limit publication permission to certain accounts so that your team can work behind the scenes on content until an authorized editor gives it the nod.

Unlimited categories and subsections. Assign your pages to specific categories, sub-categories, sub-sub-categories, sub-sub-sub-sub-sub-categories (you get the idea). Big Medium automatically generates navigation menus for your content sections, including drop-down menus if that's your cup o' tea.

Scheduled publication. Set a time for a page to be published to (or removed from) the live site, and Big Medium will take care of it like clockwork.

Publish in any language. Big Medium uses Unicode, the web's international alphabet, allowing you to publish content in any language.

Distribute news gadgets. Big Medium lets you offer web "gadgets" to your visitors, letting them add automatically updated links to your latest content on their own site.

Technical considerations

Easy to install. Upload the files to your server, run the user-friendly setup wizard, and you're done.

Written in Perl, runs on any server. Big Medium was designed to run on even the most basic web hosting accounts. It's written in Perl, the world's most popular web programming language; if your web server has Perl installed (and most hosting accounts do), you can run Big Medium. The software requires no additional database technology or sophisticated expertise.

Built-in search. Big Medium's search engine gives site visitors fast and accurate access to all of the pages managed by Big Medium.

Search-engine friendly. Big Medium generates web pages with natural-language URLs that are friendly to search engines as well as your users. Unlike other systems that generate incomprehensible, hard-to-remember URLs, Big Medium lets you choose your own file names and web addresses. Big Medium also helps search engines index your site by creating a special index page that links to every page of your site (using Google's XML sitemap format).

Manage high-traffic sites. Big Medium builds static HTML pages, without the need to hit a database every time a visitor requests a page. This means that Big Medium-managed sites can handle as much traffic as your server itself. Big Medium manages sites with thousands of pages, and millions of visitors per month.

What skills do I need?

The skills and know-how that you'll need to use Big Medium vary according to your role in managing your site. Here's a rundown of common categories of responsibility, along with the chapters of this handbook that can help you find your way.

Writing and editing

Adding and editing pages and other content to your site requires only basic word-processing and web-browsing skills. For details about how to add and edit pages, review these chapters:

- [*Chapter 2: Ready... Set... Go!*](#)
- [*Chapter 3: Editing Webpages*](#)
- [*Chapter 4: The Page Types*](#)
- [*Chapter 5: Micro-Content: Announcements & Tips*](#)
- [*Chapter 6: The Libraries*](#)

Site design

You'll need basic to intermediate knowledge of HTML and CSS to create your own custom design. However, Big Medium does provide a modest library of built-in design themes, and using one of these themes requires no technical knowledge.

For information about setting up your site's sections and using the theme library, review [*Chapter 7: Sections*](#)

[and Content Categories](#) and [Chapter 8: Themes and Site Designs](#). For information about using your own design or editing an existing theme design, review these chapters:

- [Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories](#)
- [Chapter 8: Themes and Site Designs](#)
- [Chapter 9: Templates](#)
- [Chapter 10: Widgets](#)
- [Chapter 11: Styles](#)
- [Chapter 12: Image Management](#)

System administration

Administrators are responsible for installing the Big Medium software and adding new sites, creating new accounts and adjusting systemwide settings where necessary. You'll need basic knowledge about loading files to your server and setting file permissions (never fear, [the installation section](#) offers some pointers for these basics).

For more on these topics, review these chapters:

- [Appendix A: Installing Big Medium](#)
- [Chapter 13: Account Management](#)
- [Chapter 14: Site and System Properties](#)
- [Chapter 15: Managing Multiple Sites](#)

What's new in Big Medium 2?

If you've never used Big Medium: *Congratulations, it's all new to you!* Feel free to head straight over to [Chapter 2: Ready... Set... Go!](#).

If you're a veteran of previous versions of Big Medium, here's an overview of the changes you'll find in Big Medium 2.

New features

New interface	Big Medium gets a facelift, with a new look that's not only pretty but more intuitive and efficient.
Site search	Big Medium's built-in search engine gives visitors fast access to your site's archives.
Image galleries and slideshows	Any page of the site can have its own image gallery with a slideshow feature and a gorgeous "lightbox" effect.
Image thumbnailing	If your server has the supported software installed, Big Medium

	automatically sizes images for you; load your original image, and Big Medium takes care of the rest.
Unlimited subsection depth	Previous versions of Big Medium limited you to top-level sections and a single level of subsection categories. Now you can have unlimited levels of subsections (and sub-sub-sub-subsections, etc.).
Version control	Review the edit history of any page.
Dropdown navigation menus	The navigation widgets generate dropdown menus to allow easy navigation to your site’s subsections.
Libraries	When you add images, documents and authors to your site, they’re added to a library for easy reuse. Batch-upload images and documents to the library by uploading a single media-packed zip file.
Scheduled publication	Set times to publish/unpublish pages.
Podcasting	Create your own radio or TV show; add media files to your site, and Big Medium generates your podcast automatically.
Visitor comments	Make your site a two-way conversation by allowing visitors to post comments on your pages.
Theme library	The theme library replaces the “skins” feature in previous versions and makes it much easier to add a new design to your site.
WYSIWYG style editor	The new style editor gives you a live preview of your style changes for over 50 page elements.
Easy CSS and template editing	The editing process for custom style sheets and templates is streamlined with easy access, in-browser editing and the elimination of clunky file uploads.
Sitewide templates	Previous versions required you to load a set of templates for each and every section of your site. Now you can load a set of sitewide templates to use for all sections of the site, unless you specifically choose to customize a section’s templates.
Markdown editing	Big Medium 2 adds Markdown editing to the “rich text” and “raw HTML” editing options of previous versions. If you’re a writer or editor who prefers plain text to WYSIWYG tools, or who likes to add your own custom HTML to your text, you’ll find Markdown to be utterly sublime.
Tags	Tag pages with keywords to help visitors find similar content.
All-new HTML markup	Nearly all of Big Medium’s widgets get a HTML overhaul, adding lots of class “hooks” to give CSS-savvy designers complete control over every design element.
Easy announcement editing	Announcements are now available to publishers, not just webmasters and administrators, and may be edited using Big Medium’s rich-text tools.

Custom sorting options	Previous versions sorted pages by publication date only; now you can also choose to sort by your own custom priority, modification date or alphabetical order.
Custom link formats	Customize any and all link widgets with the specific content elements you want to include.
Section-specific preferences	Nearly all of Big Medium's HTML preferences can be customized for individual sections.
Section-specific privileges	Set account permissions and privileges for individual sections to specify exactly which content editors are allowed to add and edit.
Security improvements	The security and permission settings on Big Medium's data and HTML files now default to high-security settings.
Smart related links	When you add related links to other pages of the site, Big Medium automatically keeps them up to date, removing deleted links or updating moved pages automatically.
Copy content between sites	Copy pages, announcements and tips to other sites in your Big Medium system.
Plugin architecture	Big Medium's new engine has a plugin architecture that allows third-party Perl programmers to create modules that add and extend features.
Google sitemaps	Big Medium 2 generates XML sitemaps behind the scenes, helping search engines to index all pages of your site.

Widget changes

Big Medium 2 uses a new style for the widget tags that bring your design templates to life. Example 1.1 shows the format that replaces the old ++WIDGETNAME++ format.

```
<%widgetname%>
<%widgetname attribute="value"%> <!-- some have attributes, like HTML -->
```

Example 1.1. Widget tag format

A few widgets have changed names:

- <%links%> replaces ++LONGLINKS++
- <%morelinks%> replaces ++SHORTLINKS++
- <%overflow%> replaces ++MOREMAIN++
- <%sections%> replaces ++BROWSEMORE++
- <%tips%> replaces ++TIP++

- `<%announcements%>` replaces `++ANNOUNCE++`
- `<%feeds%>` replaces `++NEWSFEED++`
- `<%footer%>`, `<%bigmedium%>` and `<%sitemap%>` replace `++ABOUTUS++`

There are plenty of new widgets, too. See [Chapter 10: Widgets](#) for details.

Importing your Big Medium v1 site

Big Medium 2 includes a utility to import your sites from Big Medium v1. The importer juggles all of the details of updating your templates and styles to the new formats. For complete details, see [Appendix E: Importing Sites from Big Medium 1.x](#).

Ready... Set... Go!

Enough with the preliminaries

Let's get this fandango started.

Get an account

You access Big Medium through a password-protected website on your server. In order to use it, you'll need an account.

Administrators

If Big Medium is not yet installed on your server, you can find complete instructions in [Appendix A: Installing Big Medium](#). The instructions will walk you through the process of setting up your administrator account and configuring your first site in Big Medium. The instructions also include details for upgrading from previous versions of Big Medium.

Writers, editors and webmasters

If you don't yet have a Big Medium account, ask your site's Big Medium administrator to create one for you. He or she will provide you with your user name and password, along with the URL of the webpage where you can sign into Big Medium.

Sign in

To sign into Big Medium, go to the sign-in page and enter your user name and password. For most installations, that address will be in a directory named `badmin`. For example:

`http://www.example.com/badmin`



Figure 2.1. The sign-in screen



What if I forget my user name or password?

Relax, it happens to all of us sooner or later. To reset your password, click the “Forgot your user name or password?” link on the Big Medium sign-in page.

The next screen asks for some additional information. If you have forgotten your password, enter the user name for your account, and Big Medium will send an e-mail to your account with a link and instructions for resetting your password.

Um, I forgot my user name, too.

If you have forgotten your user name, enter your e-mail address, and Big Medium will send your account name to your address. You can then use that user name to request a password reset for the account.

Select a site to edit

If your Big Medium installation is managing more than one site, you may be asked to select the site that you want to edit. After doing so, you’ll arrive at the Big Medium edit menu where you can immediately get started with adding and editing your site’s web pages.

Your account privileges

Every Big Medium account has one of five levels of access privileges to one or more sites. After you sign into the Big Medium control panel, your site privileges are displayed in the status box at the top left of the screen, along with your account name, the site you’re currently editing, and options to sign out or switch to another site.

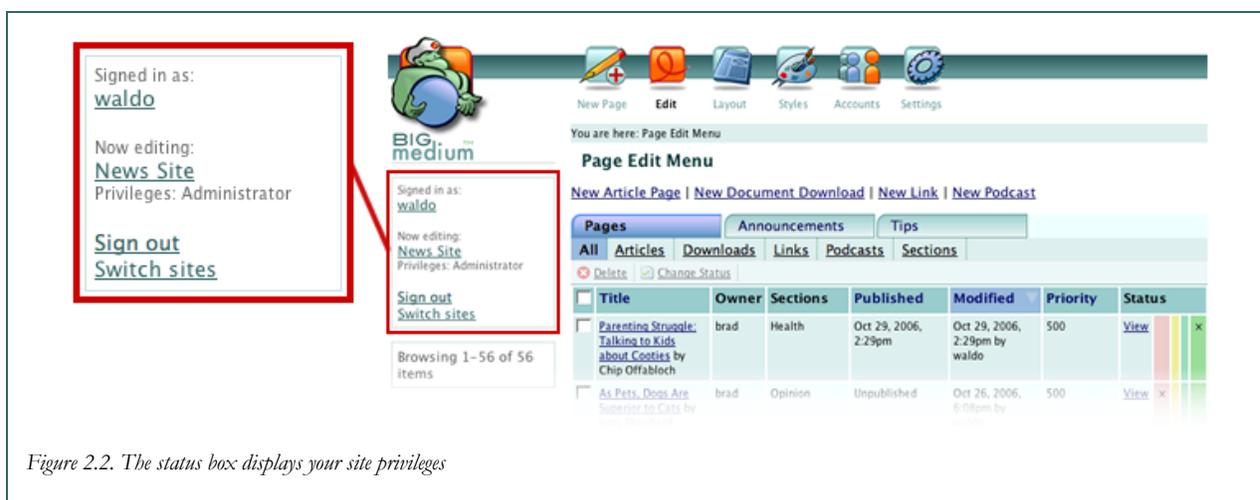


Figure 2.2. The status box displays your site privileges

Here are the five types of Big Medium accounts and what they mean:

- Administrators Administrators have the run of the system, with complete control over all system settings, account settings and site settings, including the ability to add new sites.
- Webmasters Webmasters have nearly as broad control as administrators, but their “webmaster powers” are limited only to specific sites. Webmasters can add accounts, change site design, organize its content sections and edit any of the site’s content.
- Publishers Publishers can add, edit, delete and publish pages and other content, including content created and edited by others.
- Editors Editors can create, edit or delete pages and other content, including content created and edited by others, but they cannot publish pages to the public website or edit pages that have already been published. An editor’s role, in other words, is to *prepare* content for publication.
- Writers Writers are similar to editors, but they cannot edit other people’s pages, only their own. Like editors, writers can only prepare pages for publication and cannot publish pages to the public site.

For more information about accounts and access privileges, see [Chapter 13: Account Management](#).

Now that you’re signed into the control panel and know what you’re able to do with your account, you’re ready to start adding and editing pages to the site.

Editing Webpages

For all of its bells and whistles, Big Medium’s reason for being is to make it easy for you to add and edit webpages. Although much of this handbook is dedicated to the finer points of how to tweak the software to shape your site exactly the way that you want it, Big Medium earns its supper in the content editor, where you’ll spend most of your time.

The edit menu

When you first sign into Big Medium, you’re greeted by the edit menu. (You can also get to this menu by clicking the “Edit” icon at the top of the Big Medium control panel.) The menu displays all of the content available for editing by your account.

Selecting and sorting the content to display

Tabs across the top of the edit menu display the three types of content that you can edit: *pages*, *announcements* and *tips*. We’ll get to announcements and tips in [Chapter 5: Micro-Content: Announcements & Tips](#); for now we’ll focus on pages, which is where most of the action happens.

When you click the “Pages” tab, Big Medium lists all of the pages in the site, and the “All” subtab is highlighted. To show only certain types of pages, you can click on any of the other subtabs which identify the various species of pages: *articles*, *downloads*, *links*, *podcasts* and *sections*.

Within these categories, you can also filter content by title and/or content section. To filter by title, type a portion of the title into the title field below the content tabs, and click “Find.” Likewise, to filter by section, select the section whose content you would like to browse, and click “Find.” To return to viewing all content, clear the title field, select “All sections” and click “Find.”

The default view displays pages, tips and announcements with the most recently edited (“modified”) items displayed at the top. You can also sort by title, publication date or priority by clicking the appropriate column heading.

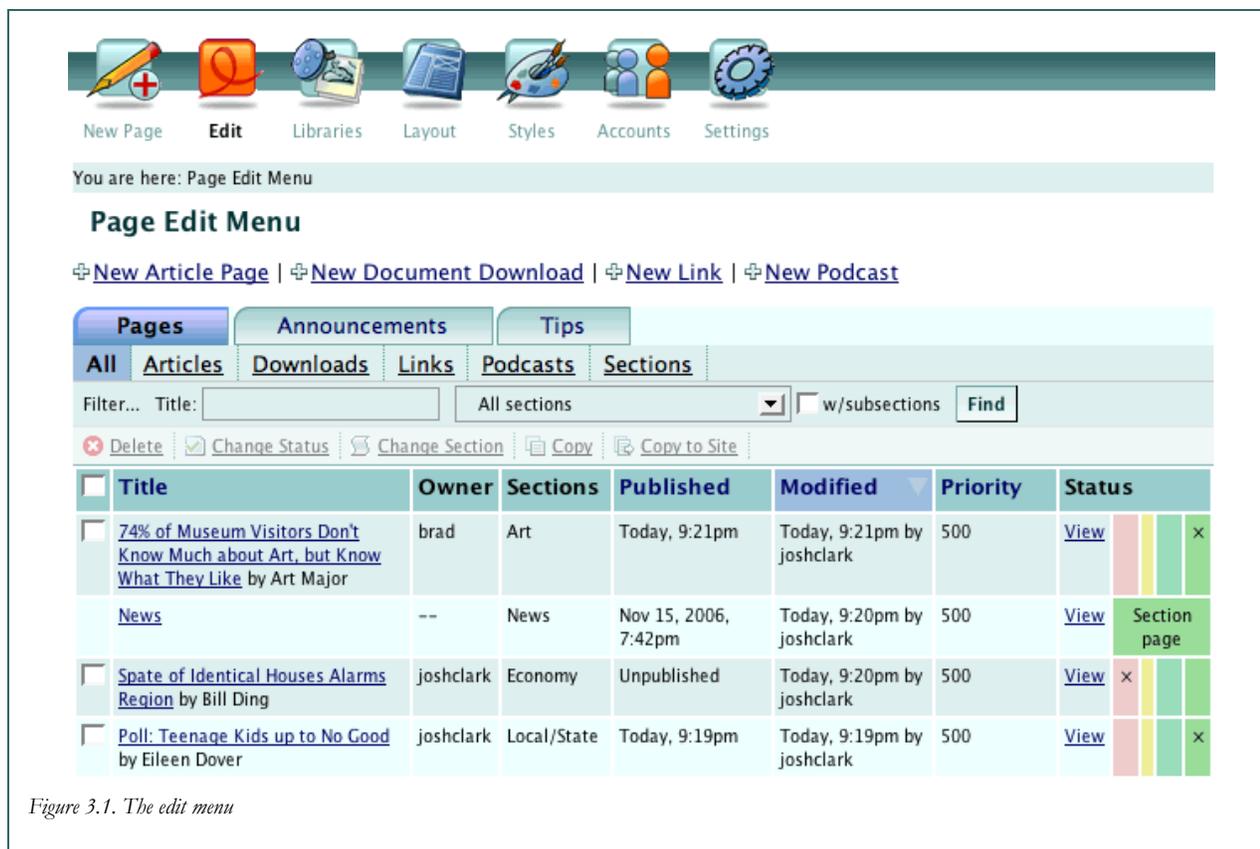


Figure 3.1. The edit menu

Page information

The edit menu provides the following information about each page:

- Title** The title/headline of the page. Clicking the title link takes you to the edit screen for that page. (If you don't have permission to edit that page, no link is offered.)
- Owner** The account that owns the page
- Sections** The content section(s) in which the page is "filed"
- Published** When/if the page was published (or is scheduled to be published) to the live site
- Modified** The date when the page was last edited and by whom
- Priority** The page's priority setting, which influences its sort order on the live site
- Status** The workflow status of the page: *draft* is red, *edit* is yellow, *ready* is teal, and *published* is green. Until a page is published, it is not available to the general public. Click the "View" link to view a published page on the live site, or to preview an unpublished page.



What's up with section pages?

You may have noticed that *section pages* have a slightly different display than other pages. They never have a checkbox next to them, and their “Status” column says, “Section page,” instead of the four workflow stages.

We'll discuss section pages in more detail later, but for now just know that section pages are special page types that represent an entire content category. In a nutshell, *sections* are containers for other pages, and the *section page* is the cover page for that section.

Every section of the site has a section page. The homepage itself is a section page, because it's the cover page for the container that is the entire site.

Because of their special status, section pages cannot be published, unpublished, added or deleted from the edit menu. Only accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges may do those actions and then only from the “Section Layout” and “Section Properties” screens.

We'll explore all of this in greater detail in [Chapter 4: The Page Types](#) and [Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories](#).

Batch-editing and deleting content

The toolbar at the top of the edit menu lets you batch-edit content items, applying changes to one or more pages, announcements or tips all at once.

To batch-edit content items, check the check boxes beside the items to edit. You can toggle all of the items in the menu by clicking the checkbox in the menu's header row, at the top of the checkbox column. The toolbar “lights up” and becomes active when one or more items is checked.

Depending on your account privileges, you may not be allowed to delete or change the status of certain pages. In those cases, no checkbox is displayed.

Delete

The “delete” button permanently deletes all selected items from the site (after asking you to confirm that, yes, you really want to do this).



Be careful!

Deleting content from the edit menu is a permanent action and cannot be undone. Once a page is deleted, it's gone for good.

Change status

The “change status” button updates three attributes of the selected items. For complete details about these attributes, see the [“Publishing Info”](#) section later in this chapter.

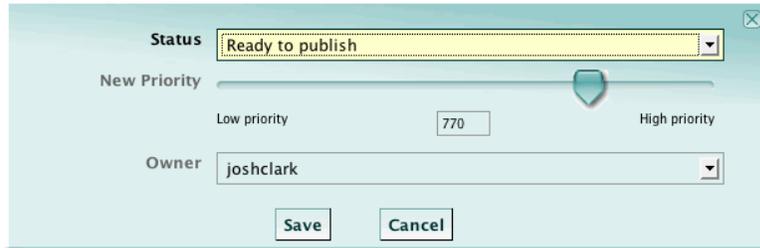


Figure 3.2. The “change status” dialog

- Status Change the workflow status of the items (only accounts with publisher privileges or better are allowed to publish items to the public site). Leave the field at “no change” to maintain the current publication status.
- New priority Move the slider to select a new priority value for the selected items.
- Owner Select a new owner for the selected items, or leave the field at “no change” to maintain the current owner(s).

Change section

The “change section” button reassigns the selected items to the site sections of your choice, updating the live site along the way if the items are published. Clicking the button takes you to a new screen where you select the section(s) where you would like the content to appear.

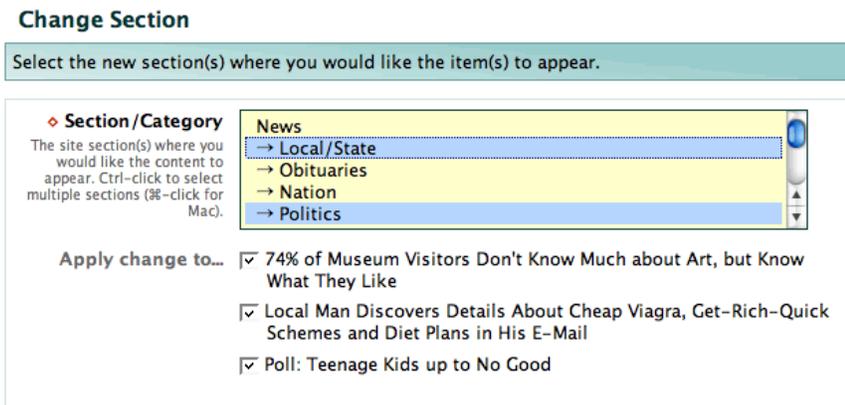


Figure 3.3. The “change section” screen

Copy

The “copy” button creates new, unpublished duplicates of the selected items.

Copy to site

The “copy to site” button copies the selected items to one or more other sites in your Big Medium installation. This button is not displayed if there are no other sites (or if you do not have privileges at those sites).

Clicking the button takes you to a new screen where you select the destination site(s), along with the publication status to assign the copies. Accounts with publisher, webmaster or administrator privileges may set the copies to “published,” which immediately publishes the copied content on the destination sites.



How are copies assigned to sections at the new site?

Big Medium tries to assign the copies to similar sections at the new site. Specifically, it examines the assigned sections for the original site and looks for sections with the same slug name(s) at the new site. If one or more sections with matching slug names are found, the copy is assigned to those matching sections. If there are no matches, the item is assigned to the first main section of the site (even if that section is not active).

Creating a new page

To add a new page, click the appropriate “New” links from the top of the edit menu:

- New Article Page
- New Document Download
- New Link
- New Podcast

You can also choose any of these options from the “New Page” menu at the top of the Big Medium control panel. Clicking the “New Page” icon itself takes you directly to the “New Article” edit screen.

We’ll explore the distinctions between these types of pages a bit later in [Chapter 4: The Page Types](#). For now, we’ll focus on *articles*. Most sites consist primarily of article pages, the text-focused pages that present the site’s original content.

Feeling antsy to get started? Let’s do it: Click the “New Article Page” link to go to the edit screen for a new article.

The edit screen for article pages

The edit screen is where the magic happens. This is the workshop where you assemble the text, images and media for each page. Big Medium will eventually take the information that you enter here and construct a webpage that uses your site’s own unique design. Your job here is to provide the content building blocks for that process.

Think of a page as a collection of display elements: the body text, images, document attachments, related links, pullquotes, author information, audio/video clips, etc. The edit screen is a web form that prompts for and displays all of these page elements.

Just because you *can* add all of these elements, though, doesn't mean that you *have to*. For example, this is all that you need to do to add a new page to your site:

1. In the "Page Content" panel, enter your page title and page text.
2. In the "About the Page" panel, select the section of the site where you want the page to appear.
3. At the bottom of the page, in the "Publication Info" panel, set the page to "Published" (if your account has publisher, webmaster or administrator privileges).
4. Click the "Save" button at the bottom of the page, and your new page is immediately added to the site.

But Big Medium lets you do much more than add simple pages of text. The rest of this section explores the options and design elements that you can apply to your pages.

Page Content

Page Title

The page title is a required field. The page title is the all-purpose title of the page: It's the headline on the page itself, the text used for links to the page, and the title in the page's HTML title tag.

You can add bold or italic formatting to a page title by surrounding bold text with two asterisks and italic text with underscore marks:

I want to make ****this text bold**** and *_this text italic_*

Page Content

The page content is the main body text of the page. This field is all about the *text* of your page. You can embed images, pullquotes, document attachments and other elements within the text, but you'll provide those items elsewhere in the edit screen. Here you focus on the words.

You can enter your text in any of three different formats:

- **Rich Text** provides a familiar WYSIWYG interface for formatting your text, similar to a word processor. For details, see [Appendix C: Editing Text with the Rich-Text Editor](#).
- **Markdown** is an elegant text-based syntax for formatting your text while also allowing you to blend in your own custom HTML markup. For details, see [Appendix D: Editing Text with Markdown](#).
- **Raw HTML** allows you to specify the entire text portion of the page in your own custom HTML. Go carefully: If your markup contains any errors, it could affect the display of the entire page.

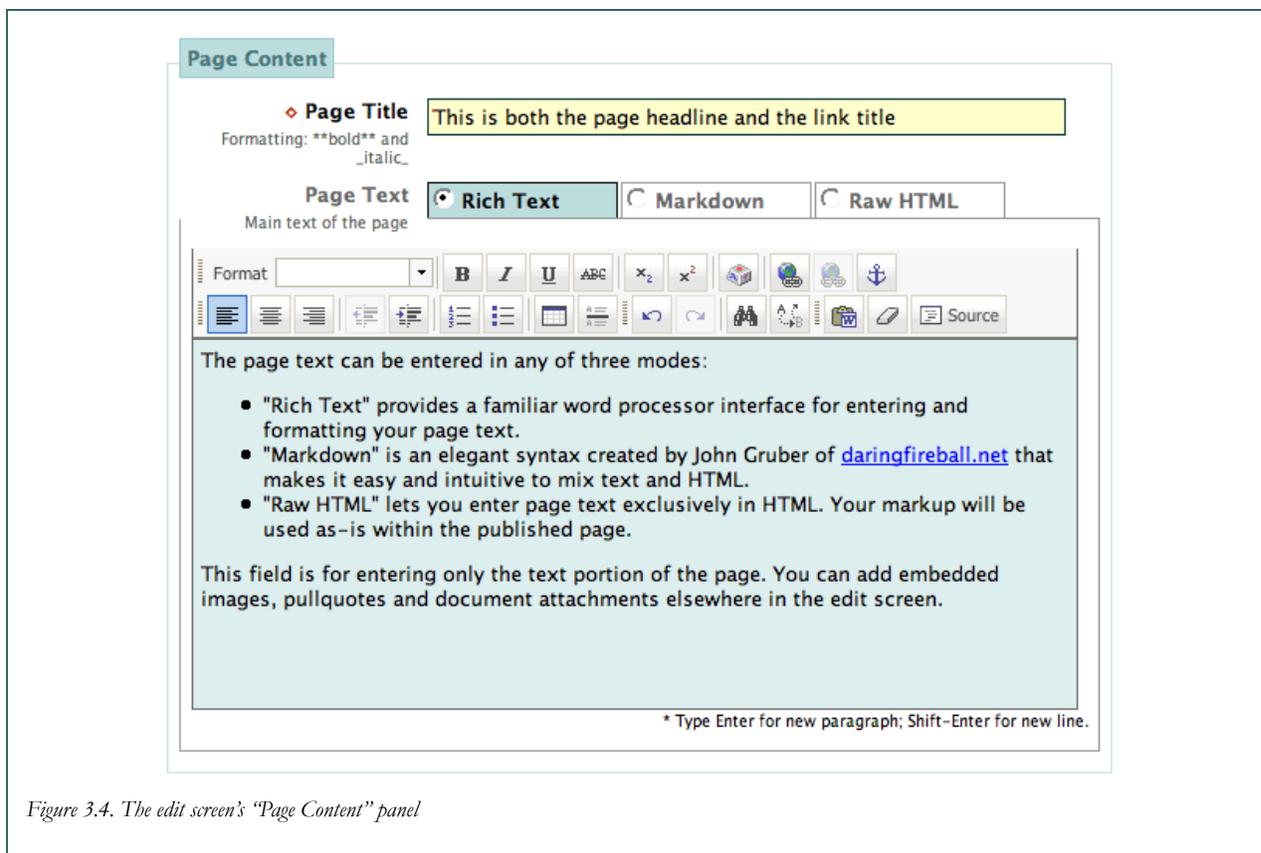


Figure 3.4. The edit screen's "Page Content" panel



Rich-text formatting tips

The Enter key. Typing Enter in the rich-text editor automatically adds a new paragraph, inserting two line breaks. If you want only a single line break, click Shift-Enter.

Cutting and pasting from other applications. When you paste text from other applications into the rich-text editor, the formatting of that text often comes with it, including fonts and styles that may not match the design of your site. Big Medium does its best to correct these formatting differences behind the scenes when you save the page, but to avoid problems, it's recommended that you use the "paste from Word" button in the rich-text toolbar. This button pops up a window that lets you paste the text into a form and "clean" the formatting to make it more appropriate for your site. For more information, see [Appendix C: Editing Text with the Rich-Text Editor](#).

Starting from scratch. You can also zap all of the formatting in the edit field and return it to plain unstyled text by clicking the "remove formatting" eraser button in the edit tool bar.

About the Page

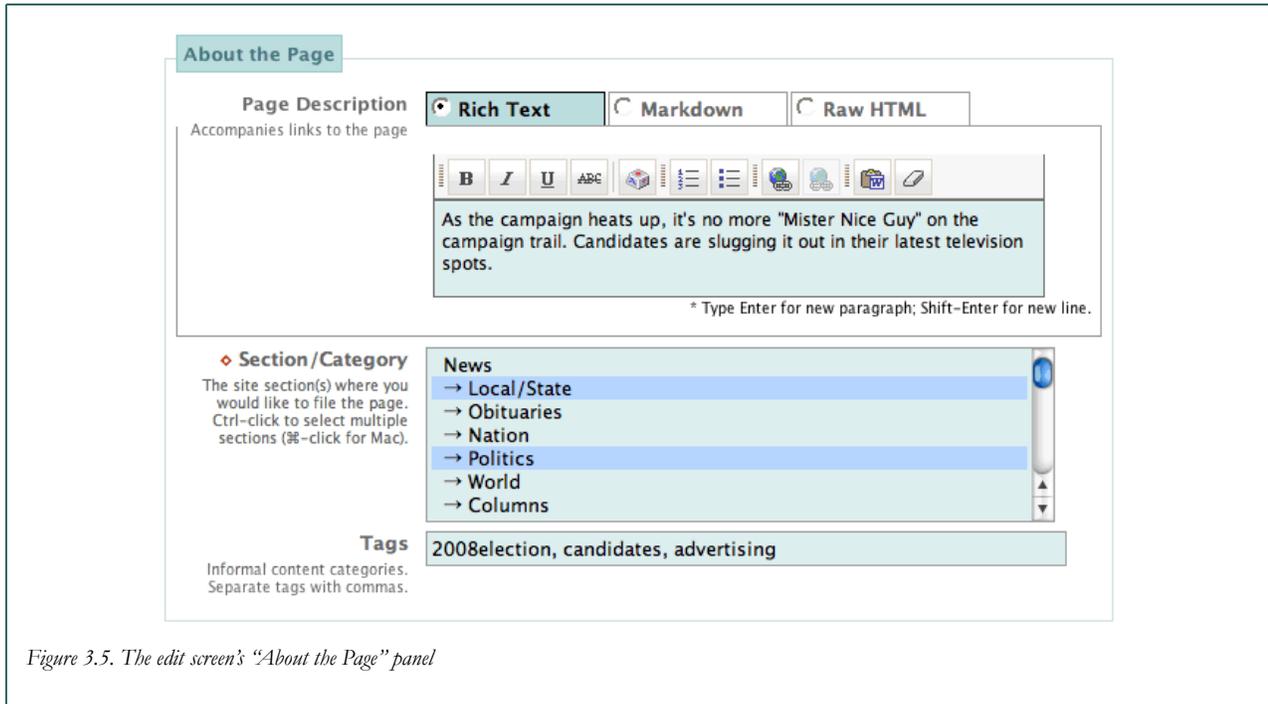


Figure 3.5. The edit screen's "About the Page" panel

Page description

The page description typically accompanies links to the page, but this varies according to the site's custom settings. The description may also appear as a subhead on the page, again depending on the site's preferences. As with the page text, you can enter the description text in any of three formats: *Rich Text*, *Markdown* or *Raw HTML*.

Section/Category

All pages must be assigned to one or more sections or subsections of the site. Sections represent the content categories of your site and determine the overall organization of its pages.

When published to the live site, the page is "filed" in the section(s) that you select here. Links to the page are displayed on the main section page for the section(s) as well as any parent sections, including the homepage itself.

In Figure 3.5, the "Local/State" and "Politics" sections are selected, which means that a link to the page would appear on the Local/State and Politics pages. Because those sections belong to the main section News, a link will also appear on the "News" section page. No need to specifically select News; by belonging to the Local/State and Politics sections, the page automatically belongs to the News section, too. It's a family thing.

To select more than one section, control-click (or command-click for Mac) the sections that you want to include. Doing the same for already-selected sections deselects them.

Tags

While sections define the big-picture category for the page, tags are about the nitty-gritty details. Tags are keywords, terms or phrases that help your visitors find pages about similar topics. The tags that you enter in the “Tags” field are displayed as links on the published page. These links take you to a page listing all pages that share that tag.

Enter as many tags as you want for the page; separate multiple tags with commas. To help you stay consistent in your tag names, Big Medium suggests tags as you type, based on previously entered tags. If you see a suggested tag that you want to use, click it to select it, or if it's already selected, type the tab key. Big Medium will finish typing the tag for you.

For more about tags and their relationship to sections, see the [“What about tags?”](#) section in [Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories](#).

Authors

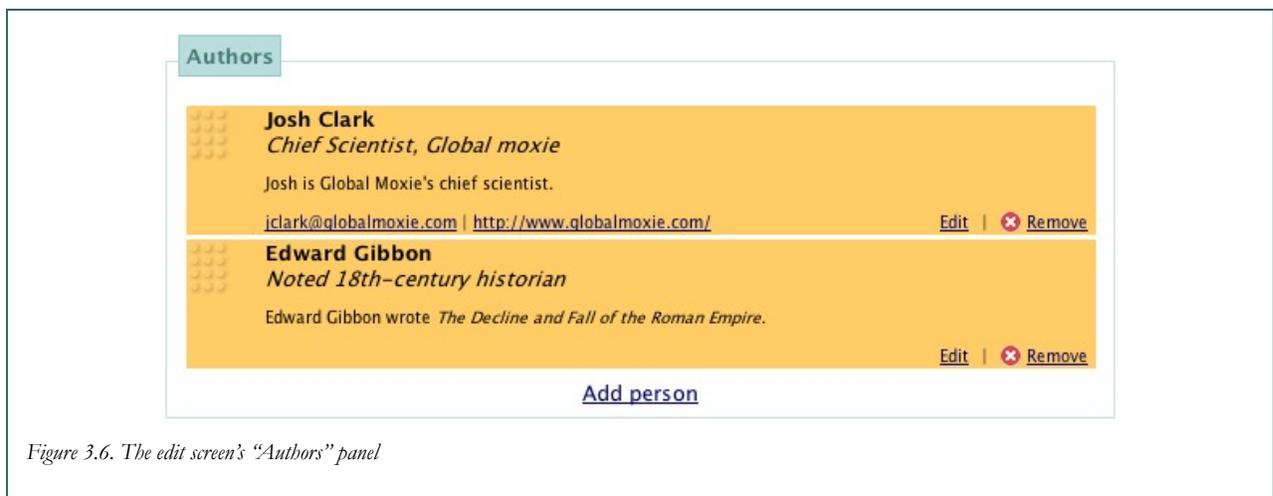


Figure 3.6. The edit screen's “Authors” panel

Pages can have bylines to indicate the author of the page. To add an author, click the “Add person” link in the “Authors” panel. You can add as many authors as you like; click the “Add person” link for each author.

After clicking “Add Person,” a form pops up and prompts you to select the author. You can choose an existing person from the site’s “people library” from the “Library” tab, or if it’s a new author, you can add him or her by clicking the “New” tab. (For more information about the people library, see [Chapter 6: The Libraries](#).)

Immediately below the New/Library selection area is a place to enter an “author blurb,” a brief bio or snippet of descriptive text to appear on the page.

After you add an author, the author is displayed in an individual edit box that previews the information about the author. To update an author’s information, click the “Edit” link on the author’s edit box. You can make changes in the “Edit” tab or select a completely different author in the “Library” tab.

If you do make changes in the “Edit” tab, those edits will also be applied to any other pages for which the person is author. That means that updating an author’s email address or changing her name to a freshly minted married name is a one-step process that is applied immediately across the entire site. (Note that this

applies only to fields in the “Edit” tab, not to the author blurb, which is specific to the page.)

To remove an author from the page, click the “Remove” link on the author’s edit box. The person will remain in the site’s library but will no longer be associated as an author of this particular page.

If you have multiple authors on a page, they are displayed in the order that they are displayed on the page. To change the order, drag the authors into the order that you prefer: Click on the textured grip in the top left of the author’s edit box and drag it to its new position.



Figure 3.7. The “Add Person” form

Images & Media

You attach and display documents, images, audio and video to your page by clicking the appropriate link in the “Images & Media” panel: “Add audio/video,” “Add document” or “Add image.” You can add as many images, documents and media files as you like. Just click the relevant “add” link for each item that you want to add.

After clicking one of the “add” links, you’re prompted to select the media item and provide some information about where you would like it to appear. Similar to the “people library” described above for authors, every media type has its own library, too. Click the “Library” tab to select a previously loaded image, document or audio/video file, or upload a new file in the “New” tab. (For more information about working with the media libraries, see *Chapter 6: The Libraries*.)

Adding new documents and audio/video files is straightforward. Just give the item a name in the “Title” field and then click the “Browse” button to select the file from your local hard drive. But you have a few additional options when you add images.

Adding and editing images and thumbnails

Big Medium allows you—encourages you, even—to load multiple sizes of the same image so that you can use the same image in different contexts. For example:

- A small, thumbnail image alongside links to the page
- A medium-sized image within the page itself
- A large image when visitors click on the link to zoom in on the image or watch a slideshow

This means that behind every image in the library are several different versions of that image, each in a different size. Big Medium takes care of handling which image size goes where, based on the site's image preferences. When you select an image and say that you want it to be displayed with links and in the page's image gallery, Big Medium automatically picks the appropriate image size for those locations.

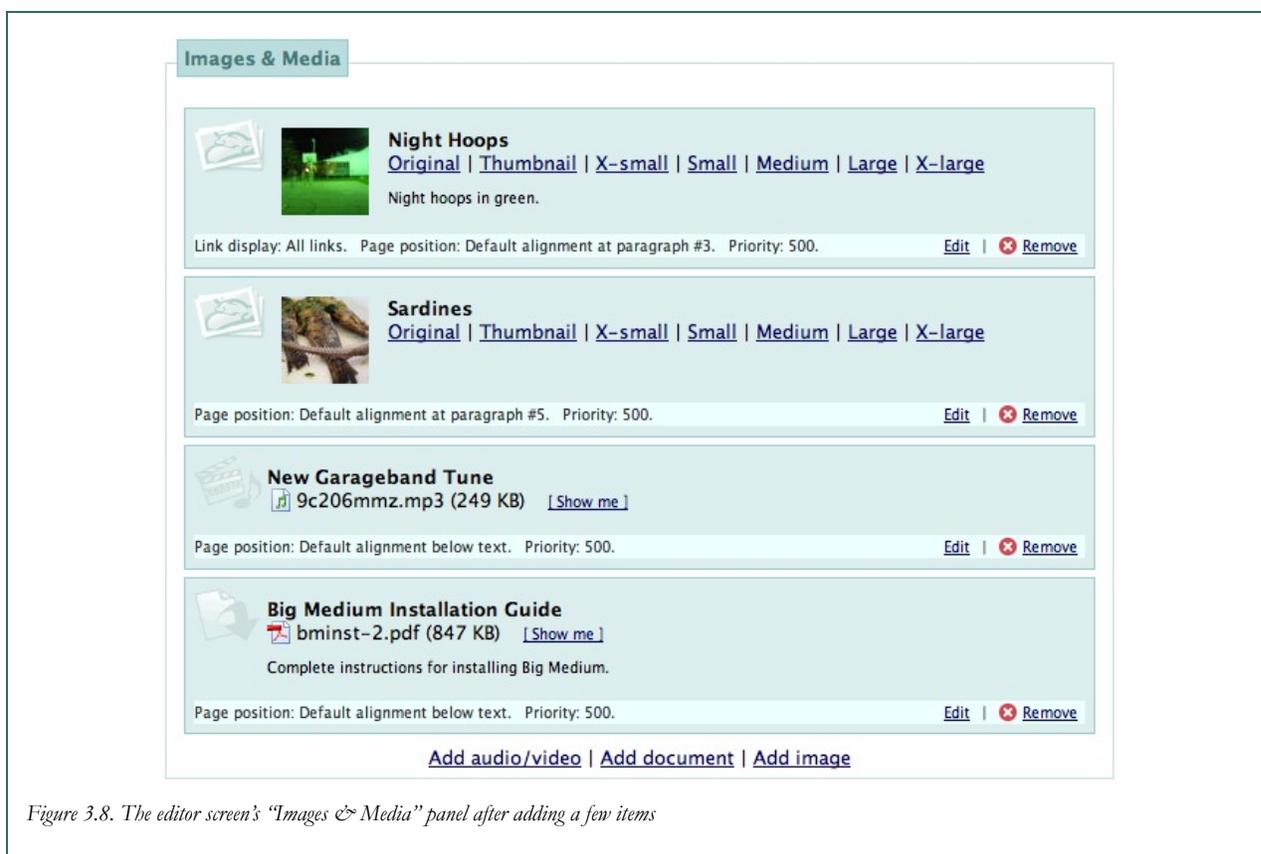


Figure 3.8. The editor screen's "Images & Media" panel after adding a few items

Auto-sizing images

If your web server has any of the four supported graphics libraries installed,¹ Big Medium will automatically generate all of the necessary image sizes for you when you upload your image file. Just upload the original image—a digital photograph, for example—and Big Medium will do the rest, churning out six or more alternate versions of your image. If your server is configured to do this for you, you’ll see an “Auto-size images” checkbox above the “Browse” field when you’re adding a new image.

All that you have to do is click the “Browse” button and select the image from your hard drive. When you click “Save,” Big Medium generates the various versions of the image that it needs.

By default, Big Medium manages images in the following sizes and dimensions, but accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can add additional custom sizes (see [Chapter 12: Image Management](#)):

- Original (the original image, untouched)
- Thumbnail (60x60 pixels)
- X-small (100x100 pixels)
- Small (200x200 pixels)
- Medium (400x400 pixels)
- Large (600x600 pixels)
- X-Large (800x800 pixels)

Loading images manually

If your server is not configured to auto-size images, you’ll instead get edit fields for each of Big Medium’s image sizes. Or, if your server *can* auto-size images but you prefer to enter one or more sizes manually, you can do so by unchecking the “Auto-size images” option.

Loading images manually also allows you to enter images as URLs instead of file uploads. To enter a URL for an image instead of a file, click “URL” and enter the web address in the field. Otherwise, leave “File” selected and click the “Browse” button to locate the image file to upload.

Big Medium does not resize or otherwise touch images that are loaded manually. The images are taken exactly as you supply them, so you should be careful that your images all fit the size indicated for each field.

Although you don’t have to load all image sizes, be sure that you load the image sizes for the contexts that you plan to use. We’ll discuss these contexts more in a second, but for example, let’s say that you plan to use an image with links and in a gallery slideshow. If your site is configured to use the “Thumbnail” size for link images, the “Small” size for gallery images, and “Large” for slideshow images, you should be sure to load at least those sizes, otherwise Big Medium may not display the image at all in those contexts.

If you’re not sure which image size is used in which context, administrator and webmaster accounts can find this info in the site’s HTML Preferences.

¹Big Medium’s auto-sizing feature requires one of the following Perl modules to be installed: [Image::Magick \(a.k.a. PerlMagick\)](#) [<http://www.imagemagick.org/script/perl-magick.php>], [GD](#) [<http://search.cpan.org/dist/GD/>] or [Imager](#) [<http://search.cpan.org/dist/Imager/>]. If you’re running a Unix-based server, the auto-sizing feature will also work if [NetPBM](#) [<http://netpbm.sourceforge.net/>] is installed. Check with your server admin or hosting company for details.

The screenshot shows the 'Add Image' dialog box with the following details:

- Title:** My Kitty Cat
- Image:** Auto-size images
- File Upload Options:**
 - Original (orig)
 - Thumbnail (60x60)
 - X-small (100x100)
 - Small (200x200)
 - Medium (400x400)
 - Large (600x600)
 - X-large (800x800)
- Share:** Other editors of this site may add this item to other pages
- Library:** Include in library for later reuse

Figure 3.9. Manual entry of image sizes



I don't always like Big Medium's auto-sized images. What can I do?

You may occasionally find that auto-sized images are cropped in a way that you don't like or perhaps have lost quality after processing. Whatever the reason, you may occasionally want to load your own lovingly hand-crafted image into one or more of the image sizes. No problem: You can replace one or more of Big Medium's auto-generated image sizes with your own custom image by loading it manually.

First, create the custom images in Photoshop or your favorite image editor for the image sizes that you want to customize. Big Medium will not change/resize these images, so be sure that they are the correct dimensions for the size you're customizing.

Load your image as usual, with the "Auto-size image" option checked. Big Medium will generate the auto-sized versions of all of the various sizes.

In the edit box for the image to update, click "Edit" and, when the edit form comes up, click "Replace this image" and uncheck the "Auto-size image" checkbox to display the manual entry form.

Load your image files into the fields for the image sizes to customize. You're not obliged to replace all of an image's sizes; if you don't specify a custom file or URL for an individual size, the current image for that size will remain intact.

The result is that you'll have a customized image for each of the sizes/formats that you loaded manually, and the auto-generated image sizes will remain for the sizes/formats that you did not customize.

Editing existing media items

To edit an image, document or audio/video file that you have already added to the page, click the “Edit” link in the item’s edit box. When the edit form pops up, click the “Replace this file” or “Replace this image” link to reveal a field to upload a new media file. To cancel the change and leave the current file, click the “Replace this file” link again or click the “Cancel” link.



Editing media items updates other pages linking to the item

When you change an item in the library, the change ripples across all of the pages that share it.

Figure 3.10. Editing a document.

Reusing and sharing media items

Just like real-world libraries, the items in the Big Medium media library are available to be used over and over again. Once an image, document or media file is added to the library, it can be used in other pages and contexts. For example, you can add an image as part of one page’s image gallery and then reuse it as the link image for another page.

When you remove a media item from the page (by clicking “remove” in the item’s edit box), you remove the image from that page only. The item continues to exist in the library for use by other pages.

By default, Big Medium allows other editors of the same site to use images and media files that you upload to the site. In this way, everyone contributes constantly to the site’s media libraries. If you prefer not to make a media file available for other editors, however, you can uncheck the “Share” option when adding or editing the item. This prevents the item from appearing in the “Library” tab for other editors (except for editors with webmaster or administrator privileges; those accounts have full access to all website files and pages).

You can also choose to suppress the item from the library altogether by unchecking the “Include in library for later reuse” option. When you do that, the media item will no longer be displayed in the library tab for any editor.

For more details about working with Big Medium’s media libraries, see [Chapter 6: The Libraries](#).

Page position, priority and captions for media items

Below the Edit/Library box in the media edit form, you’ll find several fields that indicate where and how you would like the media element to be displayed.

Include with Links. This field determines whether the item should be displayed with links to the page:

- No links.
- All links.
- Spotlight links. The media is included only when the page’s link is the “spotlight,” or featured, link on the homepage or a section page.
- Non-spotlight links. The media is included only when the page’s link is not the spotlight link.

Page Position. This field determines where the media item should be displayed on the page itself.

- Image gallery. For images only, this option places the image in a gallery of thumbnails on the page. When a visitor clicks any of the thumbnails in the page’s image gallery, a slideshow of all of the gallery images is launched.
- Above text.
- Align with paragraph: #. Enter the number of the paragraph of the page text with which you want the media item to align (*e.g.*, enter 1 to align with the first paragraph of the page text, 2 to align with the second, 3 for the third, etc.).
- Below text.
- Other position on page. This option allows the site’s designer to specify a certain position to display certain media items, outside of the main body text of the page. For example, if the site’s templates include the `<%images_limit="other"%>` widget, items with the “other position” setting will be displayed at that widget location.
- Do not display on page.

Page alignment. Determines the horizontal alignment of the item. The “gear” icon indicates that the site’s default alignment should be used; otherwise, choose the left, center or right alignment icon to specify the alignment of the item and how text should flow around it.

Priority. If more than one of the same media type is assigned to display with links or at the same position on a page, the item with the highest priority gets displayed first. Change the priority higher or lower by dragging the slider.

Caption. Optional text to appear as a caption below the media element.

Link URL. For images only, you can specify an optional URL where the visitor should be sent after clicking the image. If no URL is specified, the visitor will instead be shown a large version of the image. *Note that this setting has no effect on images in image galleries (clicking the image always enlarges the image) or on images that appear with links (clicking the image always takes you to the linked page).*



How do I change the order of images in the image gallery?

The order of images in a page's image gallery is based on the priority setting for each image. Images with the highest priority are displayed first, and those with the lowest are displayed last. When more than one image in the gallery has the same priority setting, the most-recently updated image is displayed first.

To place the images in a precise order, set the priority of the first image higher than the rest, the priority of the second image just below that, and so on so that the last image has the lowest priority setting.

Pullquotes

To add pullquotes to your page, click "Add pullquote" in the edit screen's "Pullquotes" panel. You can add as many pullquotes as you like; click "Add pullquote" and fill out the form for each pullquote you want to add.



What's a pullquote?

In magazines and newspapers, a *pullquote* is an excerpt from the text that is displayed in a larger typeface as a design element or to highlight an important point. That's how pullquotes are used in Big Medium, too, but you can also create Big Medium pullquotes in a normal typeface as a means to create a sidebar, add an affiliate link or display any other secondary text.

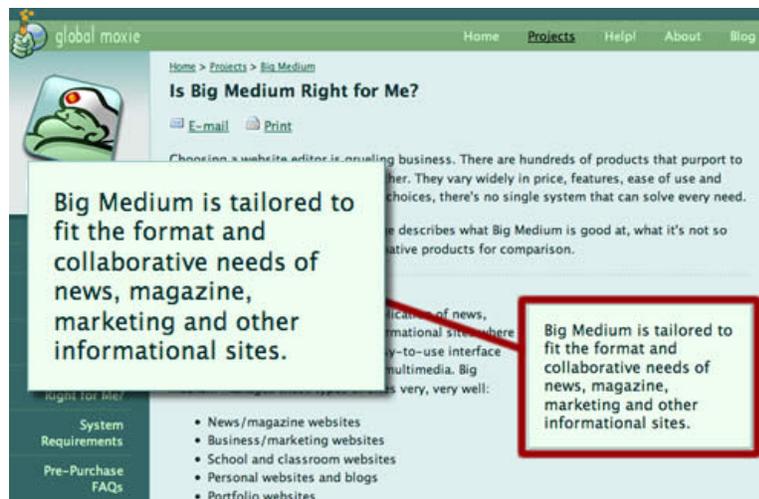


Figure 3.11. A pullquote in the wild

When adding or editing a pullquote, the edit form prompts you for three fields in addition to the pullquote text itself:

Pullquote Position. This field determines where the pullquote should be displayed on the page. The options work in the same manner as described above in “Page position, priority and captions for media items”: “Above text,” “Align with paragraph #,” “Below text,” “Other position on page,” and “Do not display on page.”

Pullquote Alignment. This field determines the horizontal alignment of the pullquote and how text should flow around it. The gear indicates that the site’s default alignment should be used; otherwise, choose left, right or center alignment.

Pullquote Size. Choose big or small text (small text can be useful to create a sidebar or a box of other secondary text).

Related Links

While it’s easy enough to use Big Medium’s editing tools to include links in a page’s [body text](#), it’s often useful to have a separate portion of the page dedicated to related links. To add a link to the “related links” section of your page, click “Add link” in the “Related Links” panel.

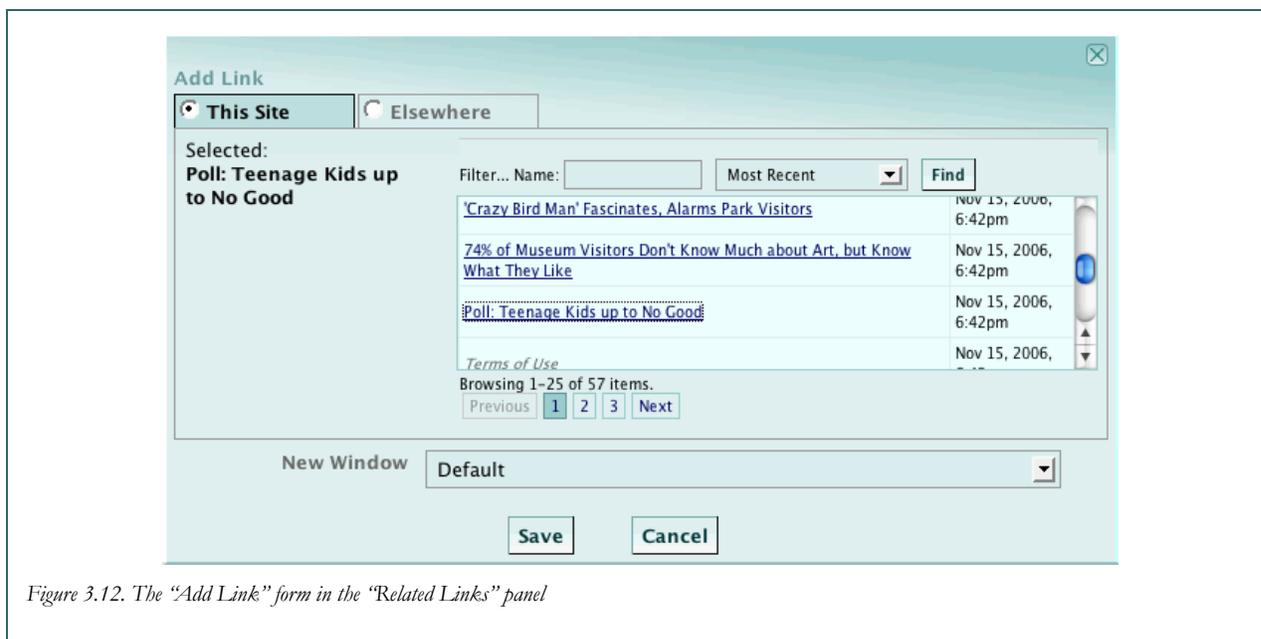


Figure 3.12. The “Add Link” form in the “Related Links” panel

There are two types of links that you can add to the “Related Links” section:

Internal link (“This Site”)

This is a link to another page in the same site. Internal links are automatically updated when the linked page is moved, deleted, published or unpublished. To select an internal link, click the “This Site” tab, and select the page to which you want to link. You can select unpublished pages, too. They’re indicated in the menu with gray, italic text, and the link will not be added to the page until the linked page is eventually published.

External link (“Elsewhere”)

This is a link to any other page outside of the site or that’s not managed by Big Medium. To add an external link, click the “Elsewhere” tab, and enter the URL and link text.

The “New Window” field allows you to specify whether each link should open in a new window.

If you have multiple links in the “Related Links” panel, you can change their order by dragging them into the desired position. To change a link’s position, click the textured grip on the top left of its edit box and drag it to its new post.

Page Preferences

The “Page Preferences” is collapsed when you first open the edit screen; to display it, click the “Page Preferences” link.

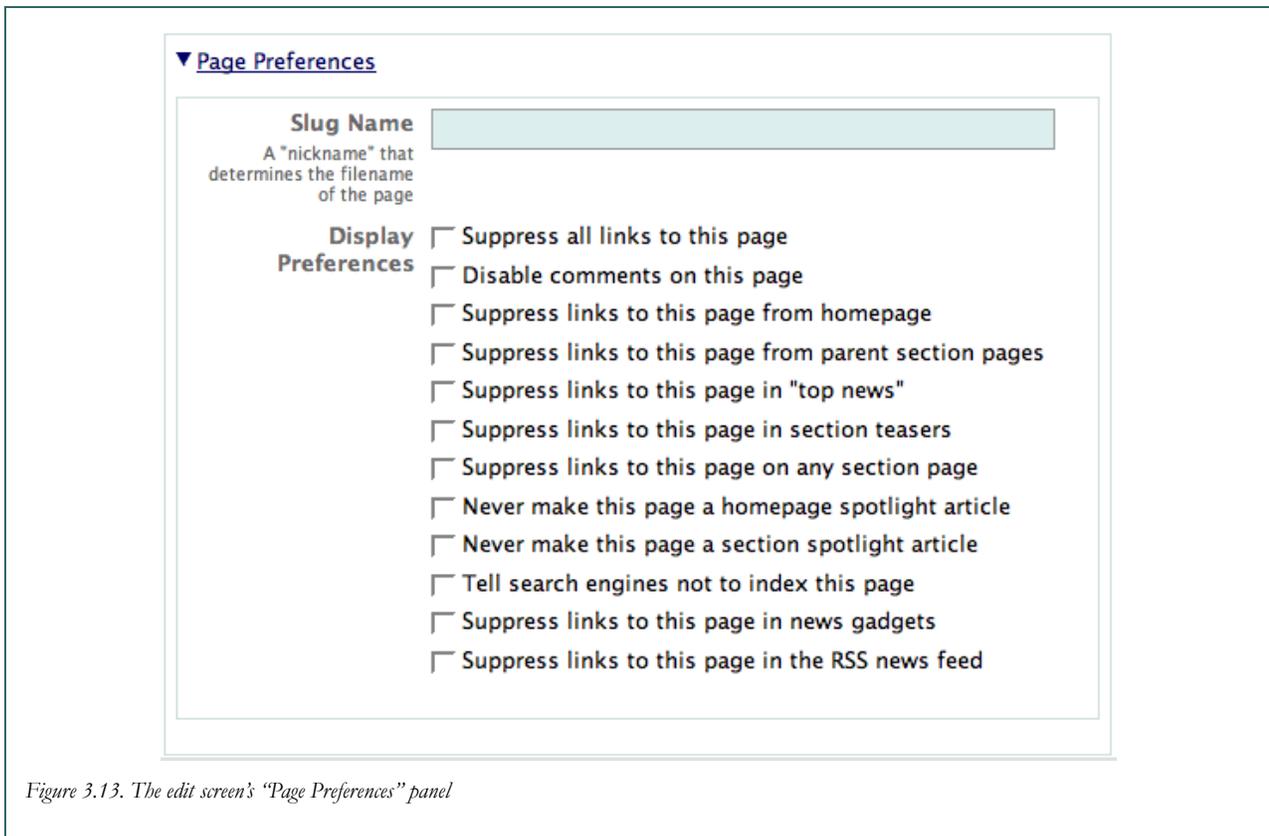


Figure 3.13. The edit screen’s “Page Preferences” panel

Slug name

The *slug name* determines the filename of the page. For example, if you choose the slug `man-bites-dog`, the filename for the page will be `man-bites-dog.shtml`. If you do not provide your own slug name, Big Medium will assign a slug name based on the page title. If your page title is “Man Bites Dog,” for example, Big Medium would use `man-bites-dog`.

Choosing a good slug name helps your search engine rank. Having relevant keywords in a page’s URL tends to give a page extra Google juice. To help search engines sort out the words in the URL, it’s good

practice to separate each word with a hyphen, as in the “man-bites-dog” example above.

Every slug name must be unique; no two pages can share the same slug name. If you select a slug name that’s already taken, Big Medium will adjust it automatically. A slug can contain only letters and numbers—no spaces or punctuation, except for hyphens and underscores.



Why “Slug”?

The term *slug* (or *slugline*) is an old bit of journalism jargon, borrowed from the printer’s term “slug”—a compositor’s type line of identifying marks or instructions, inserted temporarily in text. In the publishing world, “slug” came to mean a one- or two-word placeholder title to identify articles, often for layout purposes. With the rise of computer systems in newspaper organizations, the slug became the filename of an article in the system.

Display preferences

The checkbox options listed under display preferences allow you to specify certain page behaviors, typically to indicate places where you do not want the page to appear. By checking these options, you can prevent links to the page from appearing in certain places on the site.

For Search Engines

Big Medium adds several pieces of information to every page to help search engines interpret and index your pages. These “meta tags” are not displayed in the browser when visitors come to your site but are nevertheless visible to search engines. These tags include the *description* and *keywords* meta tags. You can enter the contents of these fields in the “For Search Engines” panel. If you do not supply an entry for the “description meta tag” field, Big Medium will use the description text from the “Page Description” field.

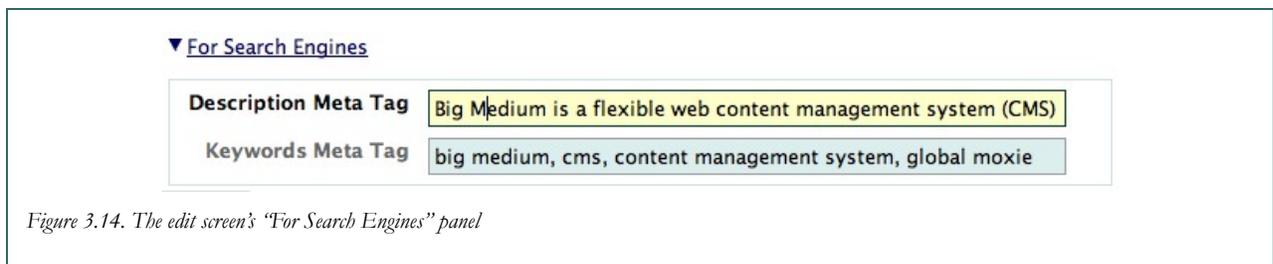


Figure 3.14. The edit screen’s “For Search Engines” panel

Once upon a time, the description and keyword tags were very influential in determining how search engines would index and rank pages. As more and more webmasters used the tags to try to manipulate their rankings, however, search engine companies responded by reducing the influence of these tags. Google, for example, ignores the keywords meta tag completely, while other search engines have reduced its importance in indexing pages.

The description tag is often (but not always) used by search engines in the text description shown along with search results. While adding a description may not do much to influence a page’s search rank, it may at least give you some degree of control over how your page is described.

Although fewer and fewer search engines still pay attention to the keywords tag, it still can’t hurt to provide

relevant keywords here to help highlight the words and phrases that best describe the page’s content. [Yahoo advises](#)²: “Use a distinct list of keywords that relate to the specific page on your site instead of using one broad set of keywords for every page.” Also, “spamming” the keywords with multiple uses of the same keyword can backfire, causing search engines to ignore the phrase or even the entire page altogether.

The upshot here is that you shouldn’t expect meta tag content to make dramatic differences in your search engine ranking. However, adding meta content that accurately reflects the content of your page text *may* provide a modest boost in rankings and, at the very least, can offer some measure of control over the page’s description in search results.

Publishing Info

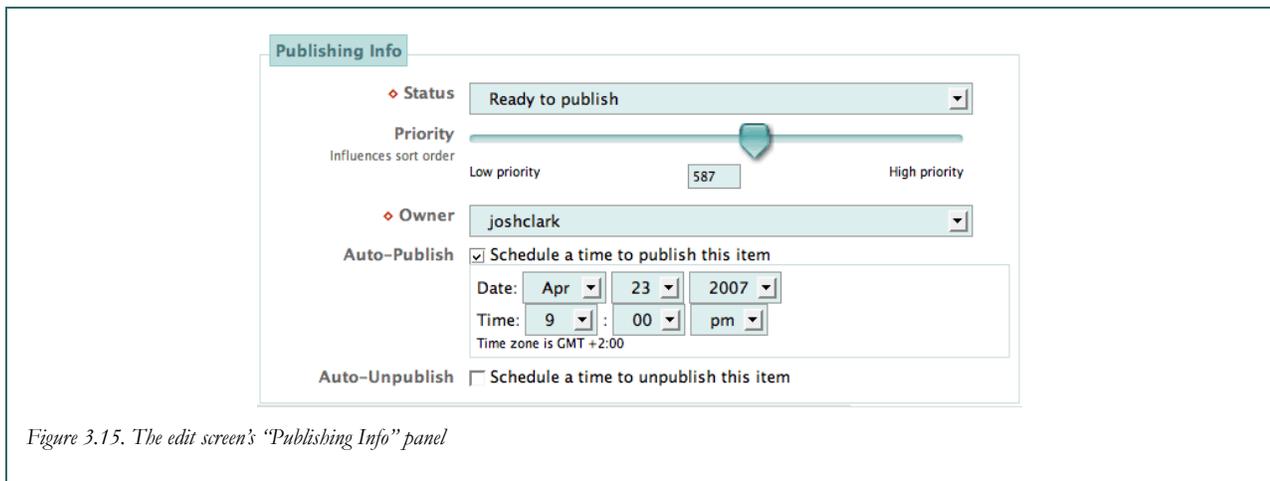


Figure 3.15. The edit screen’s “Publishing Info” panel

Status

The status field indicates the page’s status in the editorial workflow. When a page is set to *publish*, it’s made available to the public site. All other settings (*draft*, *editing* and *ready to publish*) mean that the page is not yet available to the public and may only be accessed through the control panel. Only accounts with publisher, webmaster or administrator privileges can publish a page.

Aside from the published/unpublished state, the specific labels are just that: labels to help you identify where pages are in the editing process. Use these labels in whatever way makes sense for your own organization’s editing process. If you’re editing your own blog, for example, “draft” and “publish” may be the only workflow states that you ever use, while larger organizations may find the “editing” and “ready to publish” states useful as well.

Priority

The priority setting influences the sort order of a page in lists of links. Sort order can be customized by accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges, but the default behavior is to list links on the public site by priority (highest first) and then, for items with the same priority, by publication date (most recent first). Assuming that your site uses this default sort order, that means that you can move pages higher or lower in the link list by adjusting their priority.

² <http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/ysearch/ranking/ranking-02.html>

To change the priority value, drag the slider to a new position, or type a number from zero to 1000 in the text field just below the slider (zero is the lowest priority, 1000 is the highest).

Owner

This field is displayed only to accounts with editor privileges or better and specifies the account that owns the page. This affects who can edit the page (writer accounts can edit only pages that they own) and who gets e-mail alerts related to the page (you can choose to receive alerts for actions related only to pages you own; for more, see [Chapter 13: Account Management](#)).

Auto-Publish

To schedule a page to be published automatically at a specific date and time., check the “Change status to ‘published’ at a scheduled time” option and select the date and time.

You may occasionally want to backdate a page so that its publication date appears as a date in the past. You can do this by setting the auto-publish date to the date you wish to use. (Doing this also sets the publication status to "published" when you save the page.)

Auto-Unpublish

To remove a page from the public site at a specific time, check the “Change status to ‘draft’ at a scheduled time” option and select the date and time.

Save

Your edits are saved only when you click the “Save” button at the bottom of the page. If you try to browse away from the edit page before you save your changes, Big Medium will ask if you really want to discard your unsaved changes.

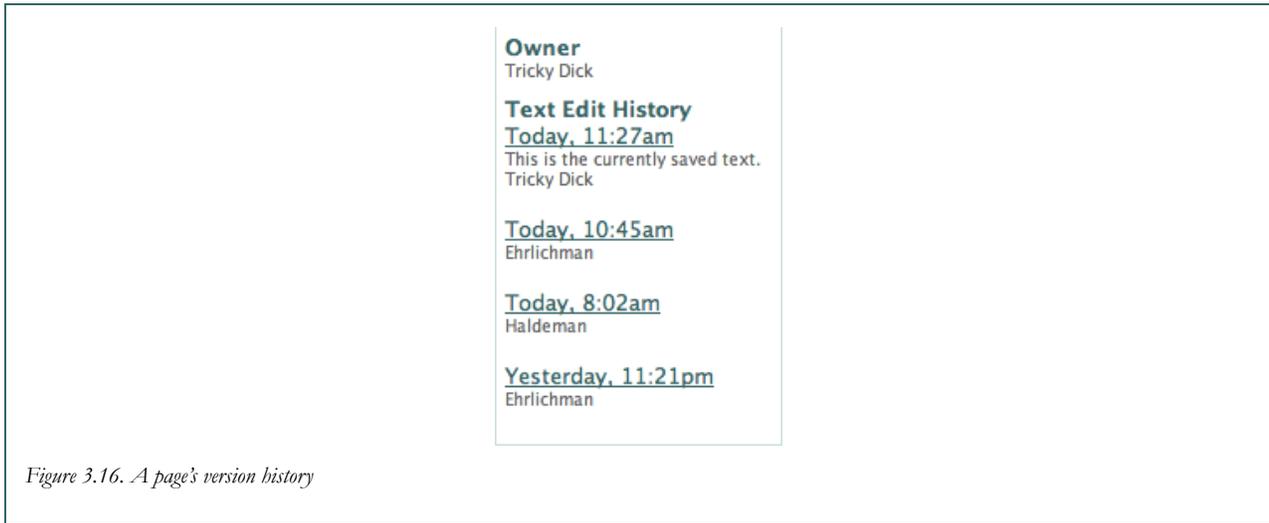
When you save a page, Big Medium updates the page with any changes:

- If you’re publishing a page for the first time, Big Medium adds the page to the site and adds links to the page on your homepage and section pages.
- If you’re editing a published page, Big Medium applies your changes to the site, updating the page itself as well as any links to the page.
- If you’re “unpublishing” a published page, Big Medium removes the page from the site along with any links to the page.

Viewing or previewing your page

After saving your page, you can see the results by clicking the page’s “View” link from the main edit menu.

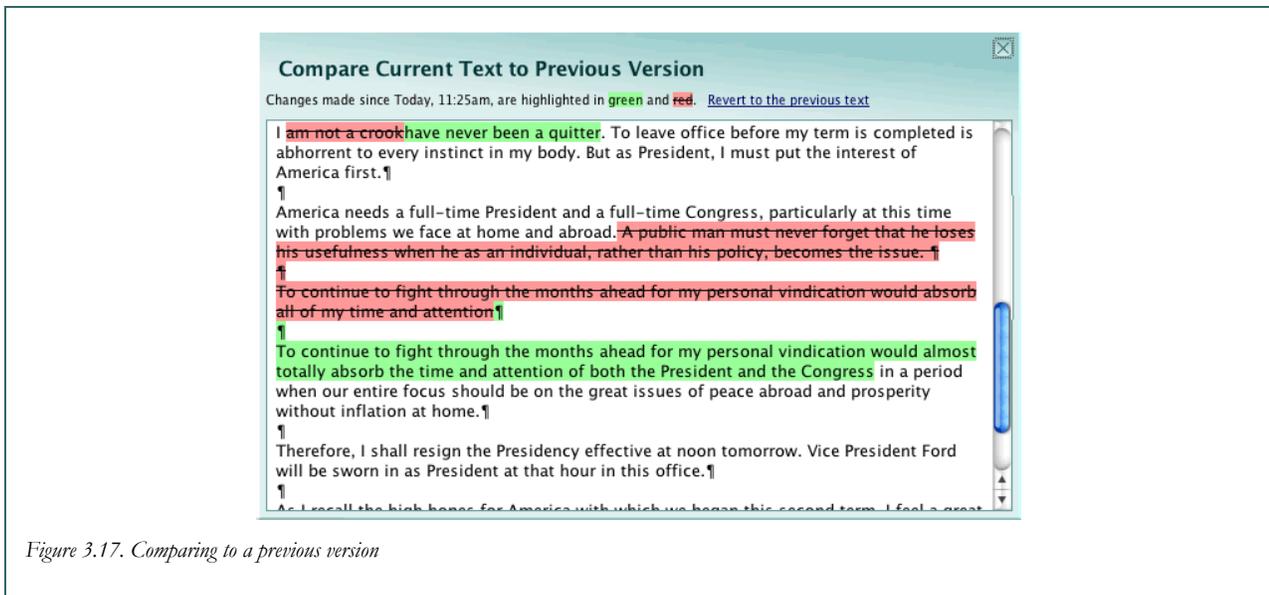
Text edit history: A paper trail for your pages



Big Medium's offers a basic *version control system* that lets you review the edit history for any page of your site. You can compare the current text to any previous version and, if you like, you can replace the current text with that earlier revision.

The text edit history is displayed in the left column of a page's edit screen. The date and time of each change to the page's main text is displayed, along with the name of the editor who made the change.

To compare your current text to any previous version, click that version's link. Big Medium displays the text and highlights the changes made since the previous version. Text removed from the earlier revision is crossed out in red. New text is shown in green.



If you decide that you prefer the earlier version, click the “revert to the previous version” link. The current text is replaced by the old text. (As with all text changes, reverting to the previous version isn’t final until you click the “Save” button.)

Some limitations

The edit history reflects changes *only in the main text* of pages.

Changes to documents, images, media and other text fields for the page are not included in the review. Likewise, reverting to the text of a previous version changes only the main text. Other fields remain unchanged.

Also, when comparing your text to a previous version, the comparison does not include formatting (e.g., bold/italic text, tables, indentation, etc.). The comparison shows you changes only to the plain text itself.

One-click editing: A shortcut from the live site

One-click editing lets you jump into editing from any page on the published site. If enabled, the feature shows you links on every page that allow you to add a new page or go straight to the edit screen for the current page.

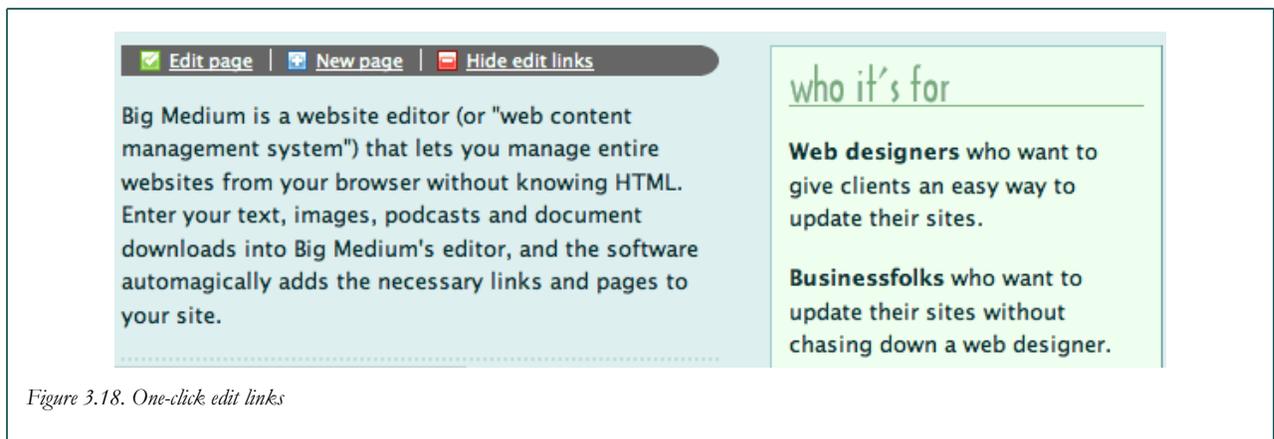


Figure 3.18. One-click edit links

These links are shown only to editors; they are not visible to the general public. To enable these links in your browser, click the “One-click editing” link in the left-column menu of the Big Medium control panel. This displays the links *on your current computer and for the current site only*. If you use multiple computers, you have to enable one-click editing separately on each machine. Similarly, if you use Big Medium to edit sites in different domains, you have to enable the feature separately for each site.

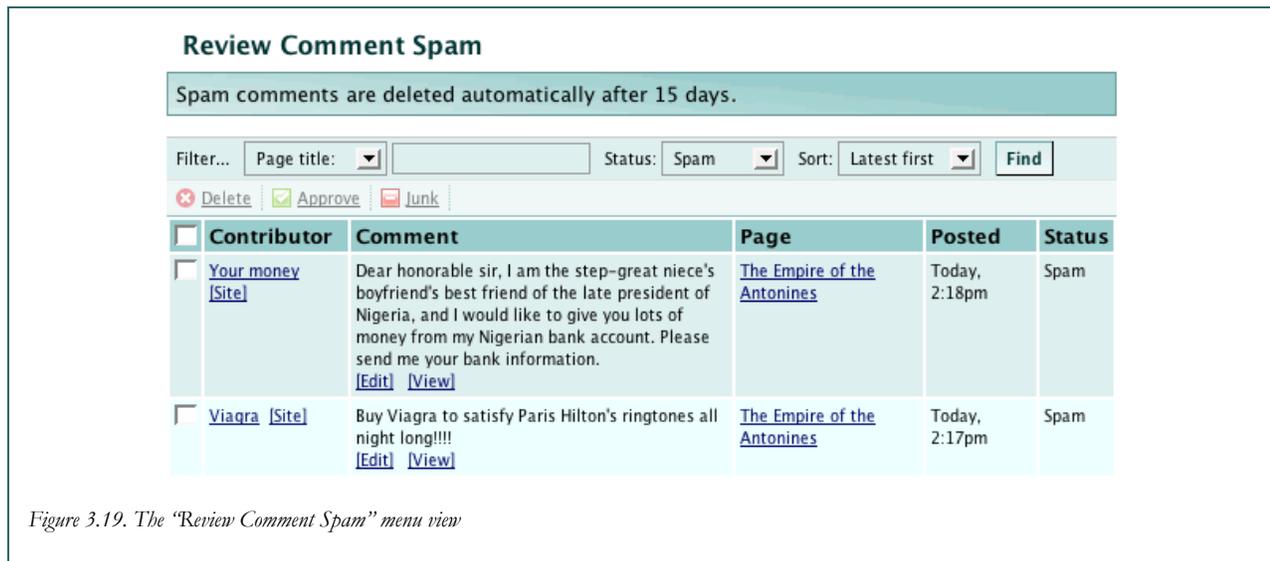
To stop displaying the links, click "Hide edit links" in the one-click editing bar on the published site. The links disappear immediately and will not show up again until you re-enable them from the Big Medium control panel.

Editing and reviewing visitor comments

Accounts with publisher, webmaster or administrator privileges can edit and review comments posted to the site by visitors. Three options in the control panel's "Edit" menu take you to three different views of the comment menu:

- Edit Comments** Review and edit comments already visible on the public site.
- Review Queued Comments** Review and edit "moderated" comments that have been held for your review and have not yet been added to the public site.
- Review Comment Spam** Review and edit comments marked as spam.

All of these options display their specific content in the comment menu. You can further adjust the displayed comments via the toolbar at the top of the menu, filtering comments by page or contributor name and choosing to display in chronological or reverse chronological order.



To delete a comment, check its checkbox and click the "Delete" button in the toolbar. The comment is permanently removed from the database and, if applicable, removed from the public site. **This is permanent and cannot be undone.**

To approve a queued/moderated comment or a comment marked as spam, check its checkbox and click the "Approve" button in the toolbar. The comment will be added to the public site.

To mark a comment as spam, check its checkbox and click the "Junk" button in the toolbar. The comment will be removed from the public site.

Editing comments

To edit a comment, including the name, e-mail or URL of a contributor, click the “Edit” link shown below the comment excerpt in the comment menu. This takes you to the comment’s edit screen, where you can make your changes.

Comments are always formatted using Markdown syntax. See [Appendix D: Editing Text with Markdown](#) for details.

Comment spam

If your Big Medium installation is configured to use the [Akismet anti-spam service](#)³ (see [Appendix B: Spam Prevention with Akismet](#)), all comments will be screened for spam as they are submitted. Comments identified as spam are not added to the public site but are instead tossed into the spam bin. These spam messages are permanently deleted after 15 days unless you change their status before that time.

If a good comment is incorrectly identified as spam (a “false positive”), you can correct that by going to the “Review Comment Spam” screen and approving the comment. This moves the message out of the spam bin, adds it to the public site and notifies Akismet about the mistake.

Likewise, if a spam message weasels past the Akismet filter, you can mark it as spam by going to the “Edit Comments” screen and marking it as junk. This moves the message to the spam bin, removes it from the public site and notifies Akismet that the message should have been marked as spam.

Moderated comments

Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can configure the site to hold all comments for review (or “*moderate*” them) before adding them to the public site. If Akismet is enabled for the site, you also have the option to hold comments for review if there’s a problem connecting to the Akismet service. See the “[<%comments%>](#)” entry in [Chapter 10: Widgets](#) for details about these preferences.

Moderated comments may be reviewed from the “Review Queued Comments” screen, and you should regularly scan these comments to approve them or mark them as junk.

You can choose to receive automatic e-mail alerts when comments are moderated by subscribing to the appropriate e-mail alert from your account page. See “[E-mail alerts](#)” in [Chapter 13: Account Management](#) for more details.

³ <http://akismet.com/>

The Page Types

There are several types of pages that you can manage with Big Medium’s page editor:

Article pages	Text-focused pages featuring your site’s original content
Section pages	The front pages of your site sections and subsections
Links	Links to web pages; these are typically external links, located outside of your site
Document downloads	Links to document files that your visitors can download and use on their own computers
Podcasts	Links to audio/video files to which your visitors can subscribe and enjoy like an online radio or TV show

The previous chapter explored editing article pages in detail; the other page types are similar to article pages, but each has special variations. Let’s explore those now.

Section pages

Every Big Medium site has one or more *sections*, the content categories that organize the site. When visitors click on the main navigation links of your site, they are taken to the front page of the section whose link they clicked. This is the *section page*. Every section of the site has a section page.

Think of sections as containers for pages and even other sections (called *subsections*). For medium to large sites, section pages are typically used to display links to pages that are assigned to the section, like a table of contents. Newspaper sites, for example, might have a “Sports” section; browsing to that section would display the Sports section page with links to the latest articles assigned to that section. There might be sport-specific subsections assigned to the Sports section, allowing visitors to drill down to the “Football,” “Golf,” or “Basketball” sections. Those sections could in turn have their own section pages displaying links to the sport-specific pages assigned to those sections.

Section pages can stand on their own, too, and might not have any pages assigned to them. Smaller brochure sites, for example, often have a handful of one-page sections (e.g., “Services,” “About Us,” and “Contact Us”) that contain no links, only a single page of text and images.

The homepage is a section page, too. The homepage, or front page of the site, works just like the other sections of a site, except that it can highlight the latest links from the entire site. Just like the Sports section in our newspaper example is the container for all of the articles about sports, the homepage is the container for the entire site; it can be used to highlight the latest links from all sections of the site.

The page editor allows you to add and edit text, images and other design elements for these section pages. This works the same way as editing article pages, except that section pages do not offer the following options, which article pages enjoy:

- **Section assignment.** You cannot change the section to which a section page is assigned.
- **Related links.** Section pages do not have related links.
- **Page preferences.** Section pages do not have slug names or the link options that article pages have.
- **Publication info.** Section pages are always published, so no publication options are offered. Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can deactivate sections, however; see the [“Editing section properties”](#) section of [Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories](#).

About section names and section page titles

Like an article page, a section page has its own page title. By default, the *section page title* is the same as the *section name*, the name of the section/category for which the section page is the cover page. But it doesn’t have to be that way. For example, when you first create a website, the *section name* for the homepage section is “Home,” but the *page title* for the homepage is “Welcome to [Site Name].”

What’s the difference? The section name is the name that appears in the site’s navigation and in the page editor when you’re assigning pages to a section. It’s the name of the section itself. The page title, by contrast, is the headline/title for the section page only. So, in the case of the homepage, “Home” is the name of the section, but the headline of the homepage (the section page for the “Home” section) is “Welcome to Acme Widgets, Inc.”

When a section page has a page title that is different than the section name, the edit menu shows you both names: “Home (Welcome to Acme Widgets, Inc.)”



How do I add or delete a section page?

Only editors with webmaster or administrator privileges can add or delete site sections. This can be done by choosing the “Layout>Section Layout” menu option from the Big Medium control panel; that screen allows you to add, remove and rearrange the site’s sections.

Big Medium creates a section page automatically when a new section page is added and, likewise, removes the section page when a section is deleted.

For more info, see [Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories](#).

Links

Use a link page to add a link to a page outside of your website. Big Medium adds the link to the homepage and the appropriate section pages, just like it would with any other page type. You can choose to have this link point directly to the destination URL or to a *detail page*, where you can offer some text about the link—a review, product description or other commentary—along with the actual link to the destination URL.

Editing a link page is very similar to editing an article page, except that the “Page Content” panel is replaced by the “Link” panel, where you enter the link title and the link URL. You’ll also find a new panel named “Link Detail Page.”

The “Link” panel

Link title

As with the page title for article pages, the link title is used as the link text on the homepage, main section pages and anywhere else a link to this item appears on the site. It’s also the headline/title for the link’s detail page.

Add/edit link

To add the destination link information for a new link page, click “Add link” to display the edit form. If you’re editing an existing link page, you can bring up the edit form by clicking the “Edit” link in the link’s edit box.



The screenshot shows a modal window titled "Add Link" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. The form contains the following fields:

- Link Text:** A text input field containing the placeholder text "The link text goes here".
- Link URL:** A text input field containing "http://www.example.com/".
- Link Destination:** A dropdown menu with "Link directly to the URL" selected.
- New Window:** A dropdown menu with "Default" selected.

At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Save" and "Cancel".

Figure 4.1. The link edit form

Link text. This is used as the text of the link on the link detail page only; if you choose the “Link directly to the URL” option in the “Link Destination” field, then this text is not used at all, and the text from the “Link Title” field is the only link text that your visitors will see.

Link URL. The URL of the destination web page.

Link destination. When Big Medium creates links for this item, you can have those links point directly to the URL or to a *detail page* where you can offer your own commentary about the destination link before visitors click through to the destination URL. If you choose to point links directly to the URL, visitors will never see the detail page; Big Medium will direct them straight to the destination page.

New window. Choose whether you would like Big Medium to open a new browser window for this link URL.

The “Link Detail Page” panel

Like the “Page Content” panel for article pages, the “Link Detail Page” panel is where you enter the text to appear on the detail/commentary page for the link. The detail page features the destination link at the top of the page, followed by the text, images, documents, media files, pullquotes and related links that you enter in the link page’s edit screen.

Document downloads

Document download pages are very similar to link pages except that they point to document files instead of external URLs. This lets you provide your visitors with any type of document file, including PDFs, Microsoft Word documents, zip files, you name it. In addition, the document will be included as an enclosure in your RSS news feeds for visitors who subscribe to your site’s news feeds and who have feed readers capable of downloading files.

As with link pages, you can choose to link directly to the document file or to a detail page where you can provide commentary or instructions along with the download. Like the link edit page, the document download edit page has two special edit panels, “The Document” and “Document’s Detail Page.”

The Document

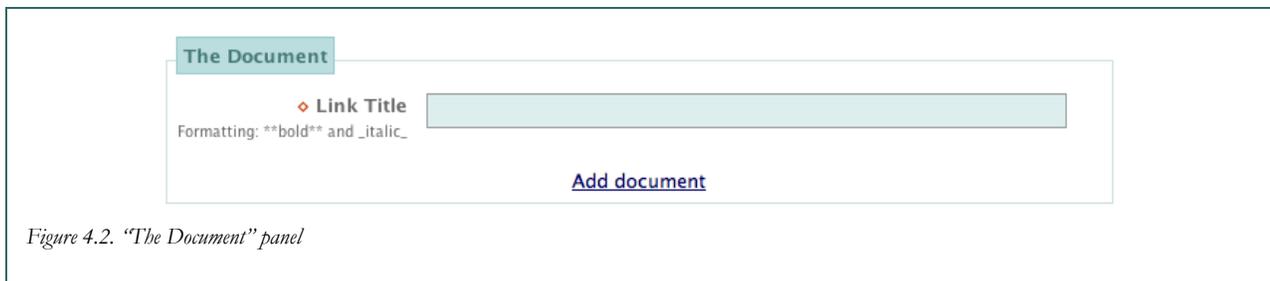


Figure 4.2. “The Document” panel

Link title

This works exactly as described above for link pages: The link title is used as the link text on the homepage, main section pages and anywhere else a link to this item appears on the site. It’s also the headline/title for the document download’s detail page.

Add/edit document

To attach the document to a new document download page, click the “Add document” link to display the edit form. If you’re editing an existing document download page, you can bring up the edit form by clicking the “Edit” link in the document’s edit box.



Attaching the document works just like adding a document from the “Images & Media” panel. You can upload a new document or select an existing document from the library. You can also make changes to an existing document by clicking the “Edit” link in the document’s edit box; this lets you update the document title or replace the file with a new file.



Editing documents updates other pages linking to the document

If you make changes to a document, the changes that you make to the item will be made on any other pages that link to the document, too. When you change an item in the library, the change ripples across all the pages that share it.

The “Document’s Detail Page” panel

The “Document’s Detail Page” panel is where you enter the text to appear on the detail/commentary page for the download. The detail page features the link to the document at the top of the page, followed by the text, media, pullquotes and related links that you enter in the edit screen.

Podcasts

Podcasts are nearly identical to document downloads, except that they’re specially tailored for audio/video files, and these media files are added to your site’s podcast feed, if you offer one, to allow visitors to download and play them on their personal media players (iPods, phones, mp3 players, personal computers, etc.). This means that your visitors can watch or listen to your media presentations on your site or subscribe to them via podcast feed.

Adding and editing podcasts works just like adding and editing documents. Enter the title and add/edit the audio/video file in the “Podcast” panel, and enter the text for your podcast detail page (for show notes or other commentary) in the “Podcast Detail Page & Show Notes” panel.



Can Big Medium help me record my podcasts?

Sorry, no. Big Medium's job here is to make it easy to distribute your audio and video content, but alas, it doesn't help you to record or create those media files. You'll need hardware and software outside of Big Medium to record and edit your podcasts. Once you have a completed media file—a mp3 file, for example—you can upload it to Big Medium as a podcast page.

Micro-Content: Announcements & Tips

The *page* is Big Medium's favored unit of currency. Nearly all activities in the Big Medium control panel are focused on adding and editing page content, or on formatting the display and organization of your site's pages. But sites commonly need many pages to share snippets of text or images. When this shared content goes beyond being part of the site's static design and needs to be active, editable content, we call it *micro-content*.

Micro-content is web content that does not itself have its own web page but is instead displayed as part of one or more pages. Some examples of micro-content:

Product promotions	<i>This week only! Acme-brand widgets only \$9.95! Click here for more info.</i>
Tips	<i>Can't get that stain out? Try using a widget, dish soap and a little elbow grease.</i>
Customer testimonials	<i>"Thanks to your company, I never have to go without my beloved Acme-brand widgets again. I love you guys." — Joe, Cincinnati</i>
Affiliate links	<i>Read up on widgets with these books from Amazon: "Widgets the Acme Way," "The Widget Habit" and "The Lost Years: My Decade Without Widgets"</i>
Favorite quotes	<i>"Let them eat widgets!" — Marie Antoinette</i>
Factoids	<i>Seventy-eight percent of American males between the ages of 18-24 say they use widgets more frequently than mouthwash or potato chips.</i>
Site announcements	<i>AcmeWidgets.com will be unavailable on Saturday from 2am to 6am for scheduled site maintenance.</i>
Content from external sites	Many sites offer content feeds (often called, coincidentally enough, <i>widgets</i> or <i>gadgets</i>) in the form of cut-and-paste JavaScript to display on your site: weather forecasts, news links, photos, etc.

Big Medium offers two content types to help you manage and display this micro-content on your site: *Announcements* and *tips*. You can edit announcements and tips much like you edit pages. You browse the micro-content from the edit menu and edit the content in an edit screen with many of the same features and elements as the page edit screen.

When you create announcements and tips, you assign them to sections of the site just as you would with pages; the content is then displayed on all pages of that section and any parent sections. This means that the homepage (effectively the parent section of the entire site) displays all tips and announcements from the entire site; a main section page meanwhile displays all tips and announcements assigned to that section and any subsections; and a subsection displays only the tips and announcements assigned to that subsection.

Tips and announcements are displayed only on pages whose design templates include the `<%tips%>` and `<%announcements%>` widgets, respectively. (Never fear if you're not yet sure what a widget or template is; we'll cover that in a later chapter).

Announcements

Announcements are typically used as a kind of news flash, an ephemeral content element that you can use for calls to action, special offers, new site features, product highlights or affiliate links that are specific to certain sections of the site. The `<%announcements%>` widget is used to display a section's announcements, and it displays *all* announcements assigned to the section. As a result, too many announcements can quickly become unwieldy. For that reason, it's good practice to use just a few announcements and to focus them on topics that are immediate and timely.

To create a new announcement, click "New Announcement" in the edit menu page or from the "New Page" menu in the control panel.

Announcements consist of a title/headline, the body text and, optionally, the same types of media (images, documents and audio/video) that you can assign to pages. Like pages, announcements can be assigned a workflow status and are not published to the live site until they hit the "published" status. When a page is published, it becomes immediately available on the live site.

By default, announcements are displayed in order of priority (highest first) and for announcements with the same priority, by publication date (most recent first), but this sort order can be changed in the site's HTML preferences.

Tips

Tips are very similar to announcements but tend to be most useful for *collections of similar content*. For example: exercise tips, product tips, customer testimonials, favorite quotes, etc. This is because, unlike announcements, each section's tips have a permanent home on their own *summary page*, which lists all of the site's tips. The `<%tips%>` widget is used to display a handful of tips on other pages (or a single tip at random), followed by a link to the summary page where visitors can view all of the section's tips.

For example, a marketing site might have a collection of customer testimonials, each one entered as a tip. The `<%tips%>` widget could then be configured to display one tip at random, followed by a "More happy customers" link that takes visitors to the page that displays all customer testimonials.

In a nutshell, tips work much better than announcements as a way to manage micro-content collections of more than a handful of items. They let you expose just a few items to your customers with the option to explore more if they're interested.

Like announcements, tips consist of a title/headline, the body text and optional images, documents and audio/video. Published tips, like all published content, are updated immediately on the live site when you save changes.

Advertisements

Big Medium does not include a built-in ad management system to manage and track an inventory of advertisements and associated click-throughs. If your needs are not particularly demanding, you can use tips or announcements to display banners or ad text in your pages. This approach will not, however, give you much data about ad impressions and click-throughs.

A better approach is to pair Big Medium with a software package that's specifically designed to manage ad serving and reporting.¹ These packages typically provide snippets of JavaScript or HTML markup to include in pages, and that code communicates with the ad software behind the scenes to select, display and track the ad banners. You can add this code to your Big Medium-powered site by pasting it into your site's design templates or by pasting it into an announcement or tip. For the latter, create a new announcement or tip, and then paste the code into the "Raw HTML" tab of the "Item Content" panel in the edit screen.

This approach also works well with hosted ad networks like [Google AdSense](#)²; paste the AdSense code directly into your page templates or into an announcement or tip.

Third-party "badges," "widgets" and "gadgets"

A growing number of sites and web services offer ways to add their content to your own pages by adding a snippet of JavaScript or HTML to your pages. These are sometimes called "badges," "widgets" and "gadgets."³

Adding this type of mini-content to your pages is similar to the process described above for advertisements. You can paste the provided code directly into your page templates or into the "Raw HTML" tab of the content of an announcement or tip.

¹ [Openads](http://www.openads.org/) [http://www.openads.org/] (previously known as phpAdsNew) is a popular open-source ad manager and is frequently used with Big Medium.

² <https://www.google.com/adsense/>

³ Just a small handful of examples: [calendar of events from Google calendar](http://www.google.com/googlecalendar/event_publisher_guide.html) [http://www.google.com/googlecalendar/event_publisher_guide.html], [local weather](http://stickers.weatherbug.com/) [http://stickers.weatherbug.com/], [del.icio.us bookmarks](http://del.icio.us/bookmarks) [http://del.icio.us/help/linkrolls], [Google search](http://code.google.com/apis/ajaxsearch/) [http://code.google.com/apis/ajaxsearch/], [photos from flickr](http://www.flickr.com/badge_new.gne) [http://www.flickr.com/badge_new.gne], [Rollyo custom web searches](http://rollyo.com/searchbox.html) [http://rollyo.com/searchbox.html], and [YouTube videos](http://www.youtube.com/sharing). [http://www.youtube.com/sharing]

Chapter

6

The Libraries

Big Medium maintains libraries of all of the stuff that you stick to your site's pages: images, documents, audio, video and people. This makes it easy to reuse media across pages and to make your documents available to other editors of the site.

If you want to add an image when you're editing a page, for example, you can select an image from the library, or load a brand new image, which in turn gets added to the library for later reuse. We touched on this already in [Chapter 3: Editing Webpages](#), where we covered adding people, images or media to pages directly from the page's edit screen.

Big Medium's library editors allow you to also browse, add, edit and delete library items from Big Medium's various libraries.

Browsing the library

To browse a library, select the library type from Big Medium's "Libraries" menu; you can also switch libraries by clicking a different library's tab from the main menu screen. Big Medium offers four libraries, for images, documents, audio/video clips and people.

You can filter the displayed items using the library browser's toolbar, located just below the various library tabs. This allows you to search for items by name, change the sort order and update the display according to your needs.

Clicking "image only" in the toolbar shows a compact view of thumbnail images that lets you quickly scan a large set of pictures. Clicking "image & text" expands the view to include image title, owner and modification date. When browsing people, it's more useful to see just the name; clicking "text only" displays the names in a compact column view.

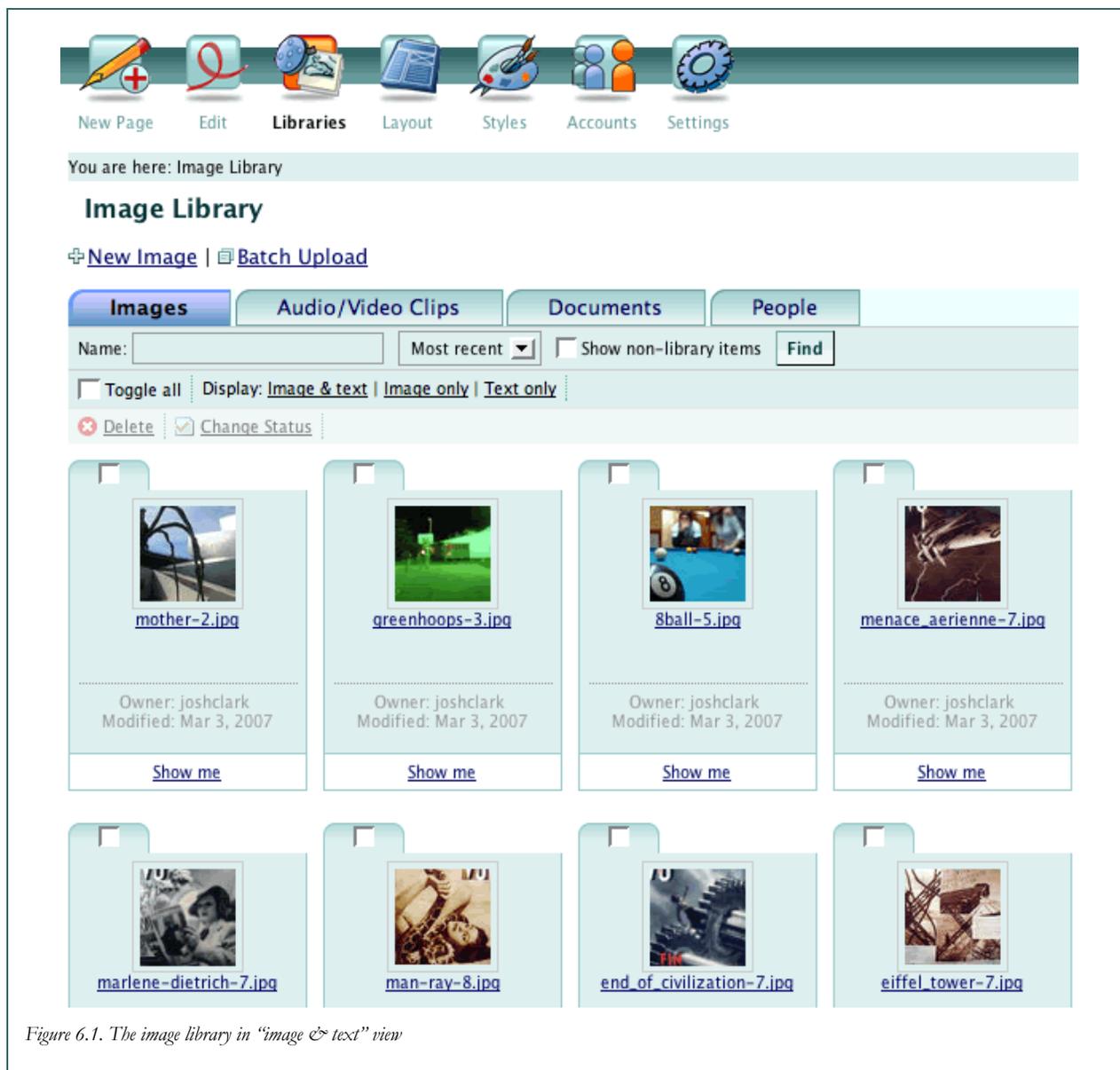


Figure 6.1. The image library in “image & text” view

Who can see what?

Accounts with administrator or webmaster privileges can browse and edit all of the library items.

People with other types of account (writers, editors and publishers) can browse items that they own—typically, these are the items that you loaded yourself—as well as items whose owners have chosen to share them in the library.

You can also edit or delete items that you own. If you're not allowed to edit an item, it is displayed with a padlock. By default, the library browser displays even these uneditable items, showing you the complete collection of items available to you to add to your pages. To see only your own editable items, check the “Editable only” checkbox in the library browser’s toolbar and click “Find” (this option isn't displayed on screens for administrators and webmasters, since they already have permission to edit all items).



Figure 6.2. Items owned by others are “locked”

Non-library items

Sites commonly have images or documents that are used just once on one page; you know you’ll never reuse them, and you don’t want them to show up in the library browser. When you add an item to the library, either from the library editor or from a page’s edit screen, you can choose not to display it in the library by unchecking the “Include in library for later reuse” option in the edit form.

By default, the library browser does not display these non-library items. To include even these “hidden” items, check the “Show non-library items” checkbox in the library browser’s toolbar and click “Find.”

Deleting from the library

To permanently remove one or more items from the library, click the items' checkboxes in the library browser and then click the “delete” button in the toolbar.



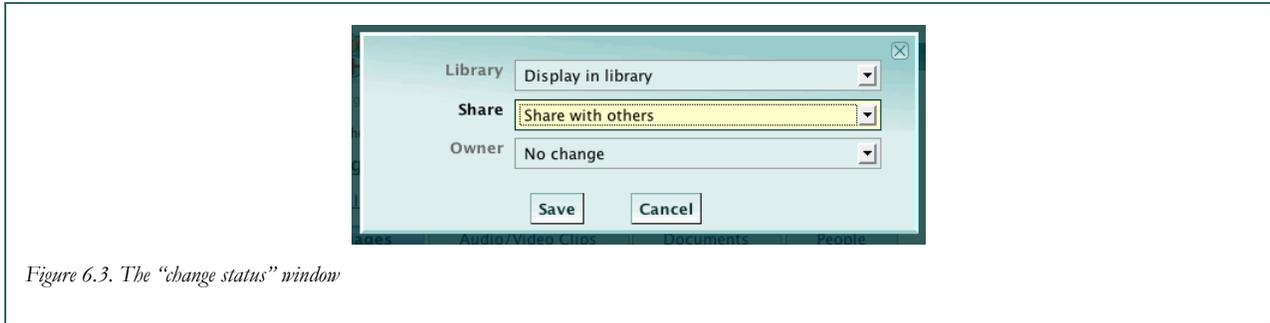
Be careful!

When you delete library items, they are also permanently removed from any pages of the site. If you want to keep the item on current pages but simply do not want it to show up in the library browser, use the “change status” option to prevent it from displaying in the library.

Changing item status

The “change status” button in the library browser’s toolbar lets you update one or more library items, changing whether it’s shared and/or displayed in the library. Administrators and webmasters can also reassign owners, changing the accounts to which items belong.

To change the status of one or more items, click the items' checkboxes in the library browser and then click the “change status” button.



Adding and editing library items

To add an individual item to a library, click the appropriate "New" link at the top of the library browser ("New Image," "New Audio/Video Clip," "New Document" or "New Person"). To edit an existing item, just click it.

Both of the new and edit actions bring up the edit screen for an individual library item. These screens vary according to the library type, but all include a common set of fields.

"Share"

The "share" checkbox lets you choose whether other editors of the site may add the item to their pages. If you leave this option unchecked, other editors will not be offered those items when editing pages or browsing the library.

Teachers at a school website, for example, might have document downloads and images that are specific to their courses. When editing their classroom pages, the teachers could choose not to share those documents and images with other teachers. The owner can still see and reuse those items, but they're no longer available to other teachers. (The exception here is that anyone with webmaster or administrator privileges may use or edit any item in the library, regardless of the value of the "share" setting.)

Changes to this setting apply only to future uses of the item. Making a shared item unshared does not remove the item from existing pages; it only prevents the item from being added to other pages in the future.

"Library"

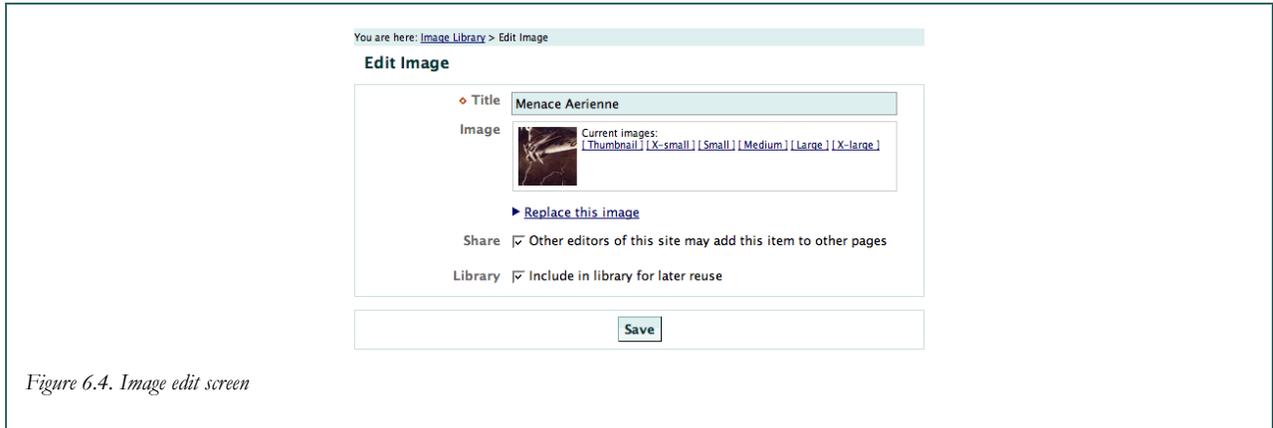
The "library" checkbox indicates whether the item should be displayed in the library. Unchecking this item means that the item will never be presented as an option to any user (even its owner) when editing pages. This is useful, for example, when you know that an item will be used only once and will never be added to additional pages.

Changes to this setting apply only to future uses of the item. Unchecking the "library" checkbox does not remove the item from existing pages; it only prevents the item from being added to other pages in the future.

"Owner"

Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can assign library items to any user, giving them owner privileges for editing and using the item. This field is not shown to accounts with lower levels of privileges.

Library-specific fields



In addition to the common library attributes mentioned above, the edit screen for each library includes library-specific fields. The image edit screen, for example, lets you specify the title and image file; the document edit screen lets you specify the title and document file. For details about editing images, documents and audio/video clips, see [“Adding and editing images and thumbnails”](#) in *Chapter 3: Editing Webpages*.



Caution

Changes that you make to library content are applied immediately to any pages containing that item. This means that loading a new image or document file immediately changes the image or document displayed on pages containing that item. Likewise, changing a person’s last name immediately changes her name on any pages to which they she has been added as author.

Batch-uploading images and documents

The libraries for images, documents and audio/video clips offer batch-upload options to add multiple images at once. On servers with the supporting software installed, this includes the ability to upload a single zip file or other compressed archive of files; Big Medium extracts and adds the items for you automatically.

To get started, click “batch upload” from the library browser.

Loading individual files

The batch-upload screen displays several fields to select individual files from your hard drive. This

old-school method gets you started with three items, but you can click “Give me more items” to get as many fields as you need. Click browse in each field to select the file and upload when you’re done.

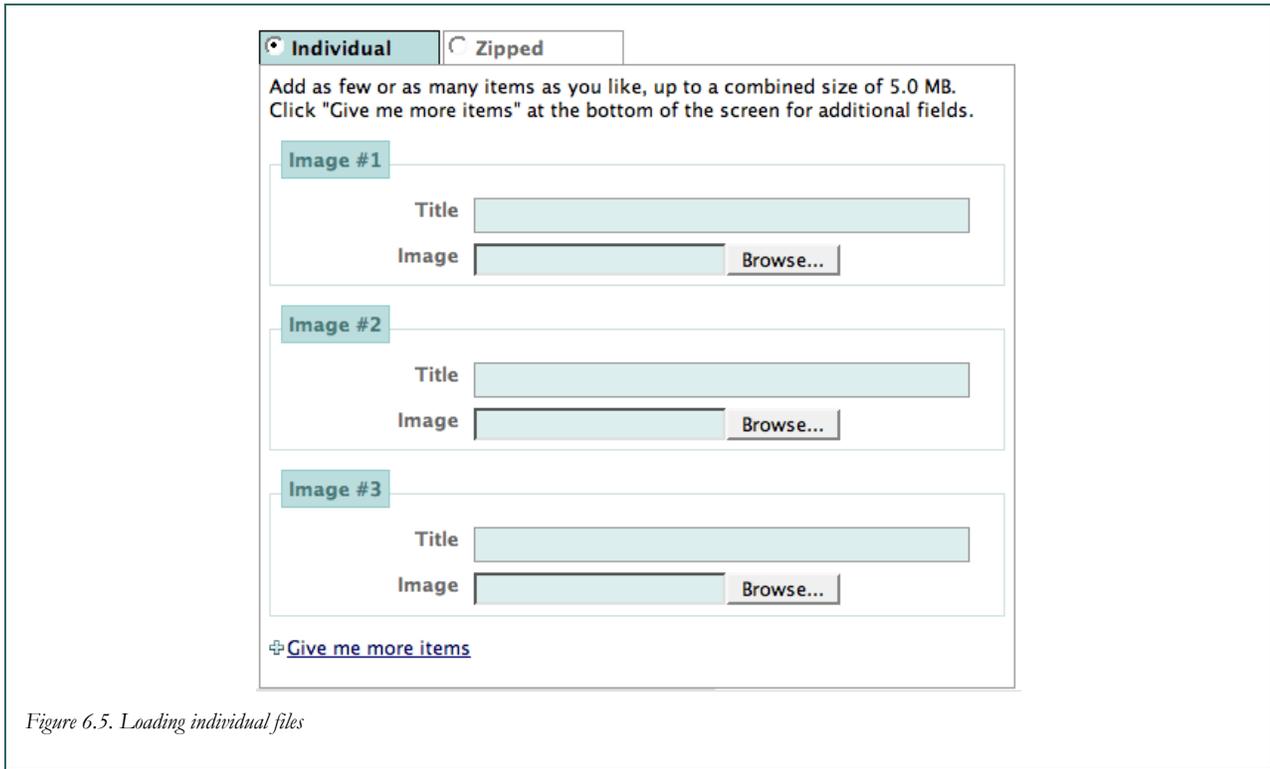


Figure 6.5. Loading individual files

Loading a zip archive

When you have 50 files to load, clicking and browsing for each file gets tedious in a hurry. So the library editor also lets you upload a zip file. Put all your images into one directory, zip it up, and give Big Medium the zip file. Big Medium takes it from there, adding each of your images or documents to the library.

If your server has the necessary software to open zip files or other archive formats, the batch-upload screen displays a second tab, labeled “Zipped.” This screen offers a single field to select the zip file.

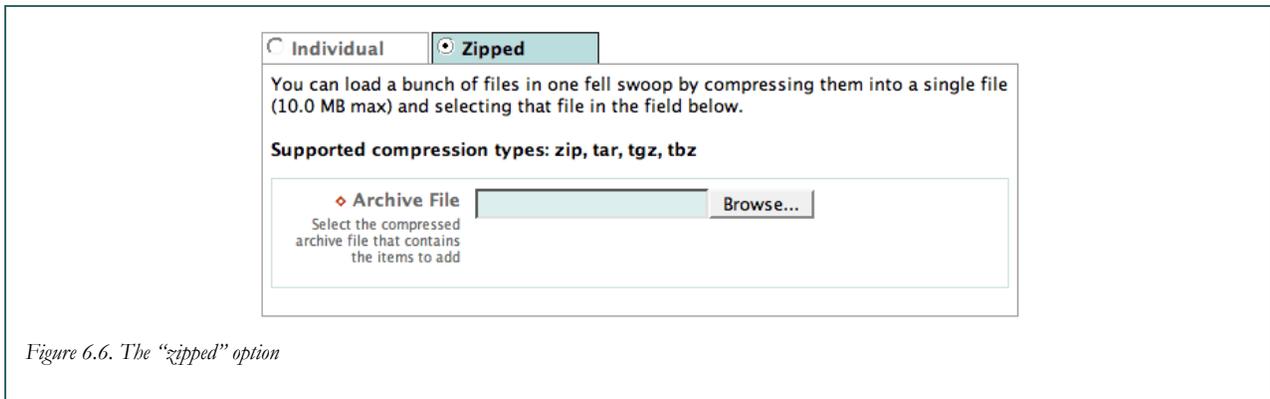


Figure 6.6. The “zipped” option

Sections and Content Categories

We've already touched on *sections* briefly in previous chapters, introducing them as the organizing device for your site's content.

Only accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can change a site's section outline. This chapter explores how to do just that. You'll learn how to add, remove and reorder the sections of a site, plus create section-specific preferences for page display and behavior.

Webmaster and administrator accounts can edit sections in two places in the control panel:

- Add, delete and reorder sections in the “Section Structure” screen (in the Layout menu).
- Set section-specific preferences in the “Section Properties” screen (in the Settings menu).

First things first, though...

What's a section?

Like sections of a newspaper or chapters of a book, website sections organize the content of your site into topic areas that help your visitors find the information they need. These categories form the basis of your site navigation.

Sections can be one-pagers (like a “Contact Us” page), but more commonly they're containers for lots of web pages (like “News,” “Business” or “Sports” sections in a newspaper website). When you add a new page to the site, you assign it to a section. When your visitors go to that section of the site, the link to the page is displayed there, along with other pages assigned to that section.

What about tags?

Tags offer an additional (and more informal) way to categorize your site's content in a way that complements and extends your section-based organization. We introduced tags briefly in the [“About the Page”](#) section of [Chapter 3: Editing Webpages](#), and before diving into sections, it's worth taking a moment to explain what tags are and how they differ from sections.

Tags are keywords or phrases assigned to a page to describe its content. A page's tags are displayed as links; clicking one of the tags takes you to a page that shows links to all of the pages sharing that tag.

When planning the organization of your site, think of sections as big-picture chapter headings that provide the same function as a book's table of contents. Tags, meanwhile, are more like a book's index, providing visitors a way to look up pages that are related to specific terms.

For example, if your site is an online magazine about architecture and design, your sections might consist of broad categories like “interviews,” “reviews,” “news,” and “about us.” These sections make up the site's main navigation. You would then use tags for other categories that are too fine-grained to appear in your main section navigation. For example: architect names (“Frank Gehry,” “Rem Koolhaas,”), architectural styles (“Modernism,” “Brutalism,”), creative process (“inspiration” “creativity”), or geography (“Europe”, “Asia”, “USA”).

Because tags often cross section categories, they give your visitors an additional dimension of site navigation. In our architecture example, the tag “Frank Gehry” might be applied to interviews with Gehry, reviews of his buildings, and news of his upcoming designs. Clicking on the “Frank Gehry” page would take you to a round-up of all of these pages, giving your visitors a 360-degree view of your site's content on the subject.

Nuff said about tags for now; the rest of this chapter focuses exclusively on section organization and editing. For details about how tags are displayed, see the [<%tags%>](#) and [<%tagcloud%>](#) entries in [Chapter 10: Widgets](#).

Section levels

Big Medium sites have three types of sections.

The homepage

Every site has a homepage section. The homepage is the top-level section of your site, providing a summary of the content contained in your site's sections and subsections.

Unlike other sections, you cannot assign pages to the homepage. Instead, you assign new pages to one of the site's other content sections, and the homepage displays links to the top pages from all sections of the site. While other sections are containers for *pages*, in other words, the main section is the “parent” container for all of the other *sections*. When you add new sections to a site, as we'll soon see, you add them as members, or “children,” of the homepage section.



Figure 7.1. The “Section Structure” screen

Main sections

Main sections are the primary categories by which your site is organized. In our newspaper example, main sections might include “News,” “Business,” “Sports,” “Arts & Entertainment,” and “Opinion.”

Subsections

Main sections can be further subdivided into subsections. Our newspaper’s Sports section might feature several subsections like “Baseball,” “Football,” “Basketball” and “Golf.” When visitors go to the Sports section, they’ll see links to pages from all subsections ; when they drill down to the “Basketball” subsection, they’ll see only pages related to basketball. You can have an unlimited depth of subsections, so that our Basketball section could itself have sub-subsections (“NBA,” “College,” and “High School,” for example).

Section Structure: Add, delete and rearrange sections

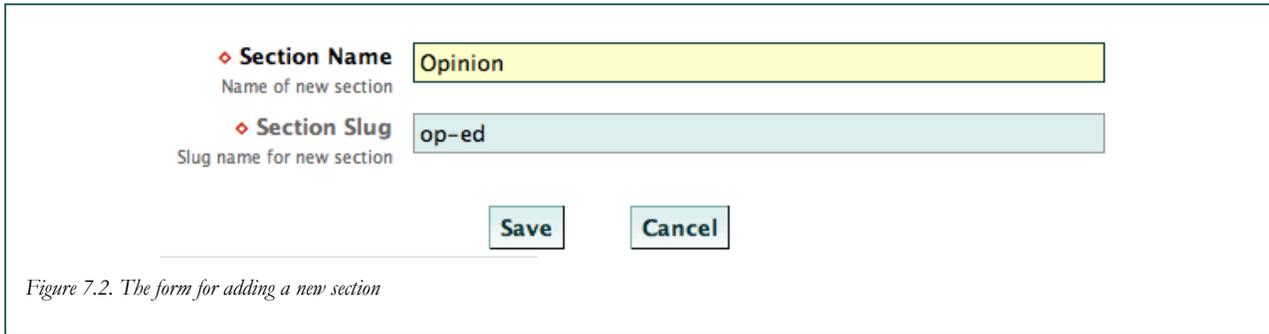
Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can add, delete or rearrange sections from the “Section Structure” screen in the control panel’s “Layout” menu.

This screen presents the entire outline of the site’s sections. At the top of the outline is the home page section, followed by the main sections. Clicking on the section-name link for any section toggles the display of the section’s subsections, along with the option to add new subsections to the section. You can do the same for subsections, too: Click the subsection name to toggle its sub-subsections.

Add a new section

To add a new section to any level of the site, click the “add” link at the bottom of the list of sections for that level. To add a new main section to the site, for example, click the “Add main section” link at the bottom of the list of the site’s main sections. To add a subsection to a section, click that section’s name to reveal its subsection list and click the “Add subsection” link at the bottom of the list.

When you click the “add” link, a form prompts you to enter the *section name* and *section slug*.



The screenshot shows a form with two input fields. The first field is labeled "Section Name" with a small red diamond icon and the text "Name of new section" below it. The input contains the word "Opinion". The second field is labeled "Section Slug" with a small red diamond icon and the text "Slug name for new section" below it. The input contains "op-ed". Below the fields are two buttons: "Save" and "Cancel".

Figure 7.2. The form for adding a new section

Section name

The *section name* is the section’s primary label, the title that appears in navigation and other section links.

Section Slug

The *section slug* serves two purposes:

1. The slug name is the section’s directory name. Say that our newspaper’s Sports section has the slug name `sports`, and its Basketball subsection has the slug name `basketball`. All pages assigned to the Basketball section will go into a directory named `basketball` inside the `sports` directory so that the URL for the Basketball section would wind up looking something like this:
`http://www.example.com/bm/sports/basketball/`
2. The slug name is a kind of internal code name for the section. When we later explore Big Medium’s template widgets, for example, you’ll see that you can use the slug name to specify that you want to display links from a certain section on your pages. We’ll come back to this down the road.

No two sections can have the same slug name, and slug names can consist only of letters and numbers—no spaces or punctuation except for underscores or hyphens.



Avoid using slug names that match the names of existing directories

Big Medium manages all section pages and files in directories that match the section's slug names, and Big Medium expects to have the run of these directories. When you delete a site section, for example, Big Medium deletes its slug directory and all of the files inside of it; any non-Big-Medium files would go with it. To avoid unpleasant surprises, it's best to avoid mixing external files in these directories.

Slug directories are created in Big Medium's page directory. If your page directory doesn't contain any external pages or directories, then you're all set, move along, nothing to see here.

However, if the page directory contains non-Big-Medium directories, you should avoid main-section slug names that match those directory names. Be especially careful of this when your page directory is the same as your web root directory. Say, for example, that you have configured your site so that Big Medium's page directory is located in your web root directory:

```
http://www.example.com
```

Say that you also have some forum software installed in this directory:

```
http://www.example.com/forums
```

...and you have some photo files installed here:

```
http://www.example.com/photos
```

In this example, you should avoid assigning any main sections the slug names `forums` or `photos` to avoid interfering with your photos or forum software.

Managing sections outside of Big Medium

It's common to have one or more site sections that are managed by other software—forum, blog, classified-ad and calendar software are typical examples. To support this, Big Medium lets you have sections that link to pages outside of Big Medium. The section will appear in your site navigation just like any other section, but clicking on the link takes you to the URL that you specify, the front page for your forums, for example.

To do this, create the section as you normally would, assigning a section name and slug. Later, edit the section's properties and set the *alias URL* to the page where you want the section to point. See the “Alternate URL” section later in this chapter for details.

Changing a section name or slug name

You can edit the name and slug of a section at any time by clicking the “Edit” link in a section's edit box. A form drops down to display the name and slug fields; make your changes, and click Save.

You can also change the homepage name in this manner. Click the “Edit home page title” link. Changing the homepage name changes the label used for the home page in the site's navigation and breadcrumbs.



Changing a slug name moves the section to a new directory

When you change a section's slug name, you're also changing the physical location of the section on the server, because the slug name doubles as the name of the directory where the section's pages and files are stored. Big Medium handles this automatically for you behind the scenes: When you change a section's slug name, Big Medium changes the name of the slug directory for you.

Changing section order

Reorder sections by clicking on the “grip” at the left of the section's title bar below and dragging the section to its new spot in the lineup. A section can only be moved within its current group; you cannot move a subsection to belong to another section or make it a main section, but you can change its order relative to its “sibling” subsections.

Don't forget to save. When you add, edit or delete sections, the changes are saved immediately. That's not the case when you change the section order. Those changes are saved only when you click the “Save” button at the bottom of the page.

Deleting a section

Click the “Delete” link in the section's edit box to permanently remove the section and all of its content from the site.



Be careful!

Deleting a section permanently removes all of the subsections, pages and content contained in that section, along with the section's slug directory and all of its contents in the published site. This cannot be undone.

An alternative: If you're not sure that you really want to delete a section and its content, you can instead turn off the section's “power switch,” which removes the section from public view in the published site but does not delete the content from the Big Medium system. See the “Power switch” section later in this chapter for details.

Section Properties: Section-specific preferences

The “Section Properties” screen in the “Settings” menu gives webmasters and administrators the ability to customize the behavior and display of individual sections. The screen displays all of the site's sections and offers access to two types of preferences:

Properties	The section’s fundamental characteristics: Name, section page title, slug name, power switch (active/inactive) and preferences about where links to section content can appear on the site.
Display preferences	Section-specific customizations for how Big Medium displays content on the pages. Changes made here override the sitewide HTML preferences (available from the “Settings” menu) and create custom rules for the section.

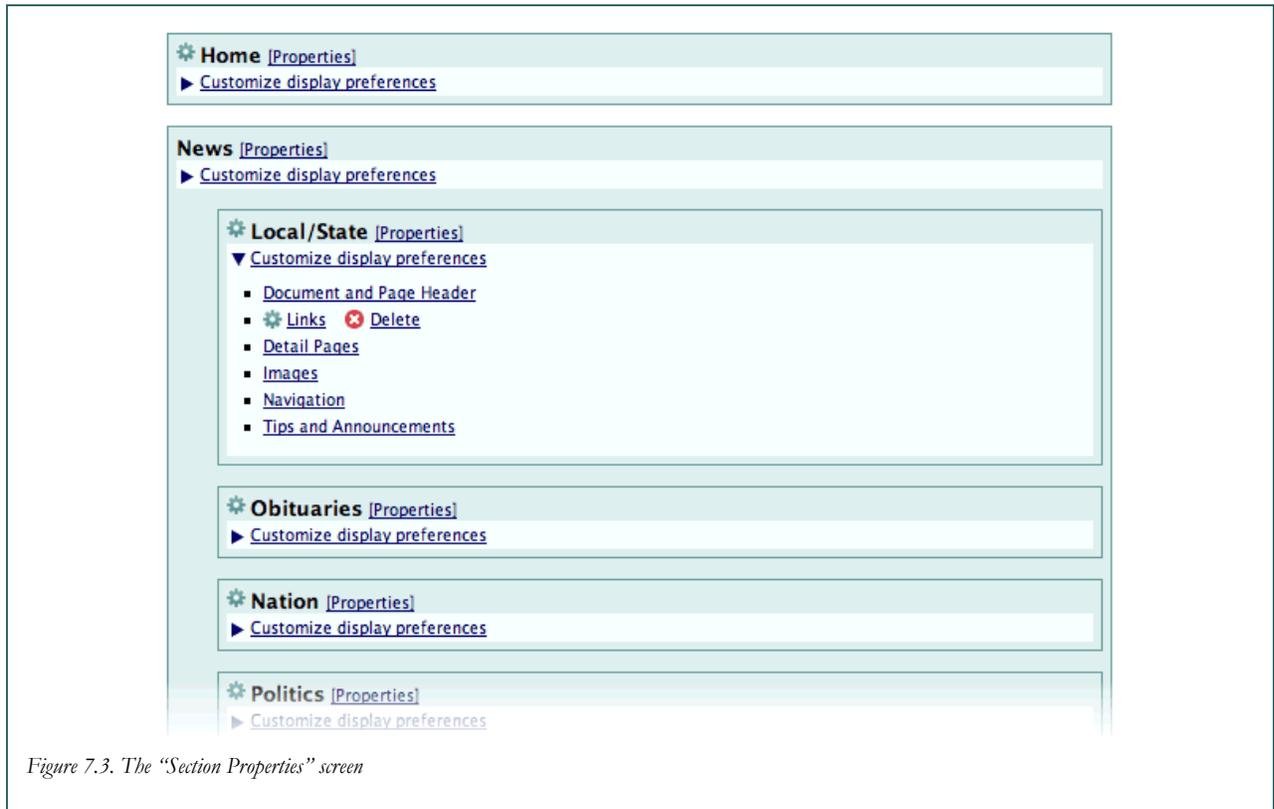


Figure 7.3. The “Section Properties” screen

Property and preference inheritance

Some section properties and all custom display preferences are inherited by the section’s subsections. So, when you customize a main section’s display preferences, those changes apply to all subsections (and sub-subsections, sub-sub-subsections, etc) inside that section. Subsections can have their own custom display preferences, in turn overriding any customizations for their “parent” sections.

In other words, if a section or subsection has no custom display preferences, it inherits the preferences of its parent. If no parent sections have custom preferences, then the section inherits the sitewide preferences.

Inheritance and the homepage

We’ve already mentioned that the homepage is the topmost section of the site, the container for all of the site’s content. You might logically expect, then, that all sections would inherit the home page’s preferences, but that’s not the case. No sections inherit preferences from the home page; all main sections of the site inherit directly from the default sitewide preferences.

This works out to be most convenient, since many sites require the homepage to have different display rules than other section pages. This means that you can let all of the main sections inherit the sitewide preferences and make your home-page customizations separately.

Editing section properties

To edit a section's properties, click the "Properties" link next to the section's name in the main "Section Properties" screen.



Figure 7.4. The "Power Switch" and "Identifiers" panels

Power switch

The *power switch* determines whether the section is active or inactive on the live site. You can continue to edit a section and its content when a section's power switch is off, but it's not available to the public. This can be useful when preparing a new section of your site.

When you turn a section's power switch off:

- The section and any subsections are no longer included in site navigation.
- Links to pages in the section and its subsections are removed.
- The section's files and directories are removed from the public site.

Turning the power switch back on restores all of the files and links, and the section behaves normally.

Identifiers

The "Identifiers" panel lets you edit the *section name* and *section slug* (which you can also do from the "Section Structure" screen [as described above](#)) as well as the section *page title*. The section name is the primary label for the section and is used, for example, in site navigation. The page title is used on the section's main section page as that page's headline and title. The page title is frequently, but not always, the same as the section name.

Alternate URL



Figure 7.5. The “Alternate URL” panel

The “Alternate URL” panel allows you to assign an *alias URL* for the section. If supplied, the alias URL tells Big Medium to point links to the section to that URL instead of to a page managed by Big Medium. This is particularly useful when you want to have a section of your site that’s not managed by Big Medium—for forums, calendars or other software-driven sections, for example. The section will appear in your site navigation like other sections but will link to the alias URL.

Preferences

The “Preferences” panel offers several options to allow you to prevent links to the section’s content from appearing in certain places on the site.

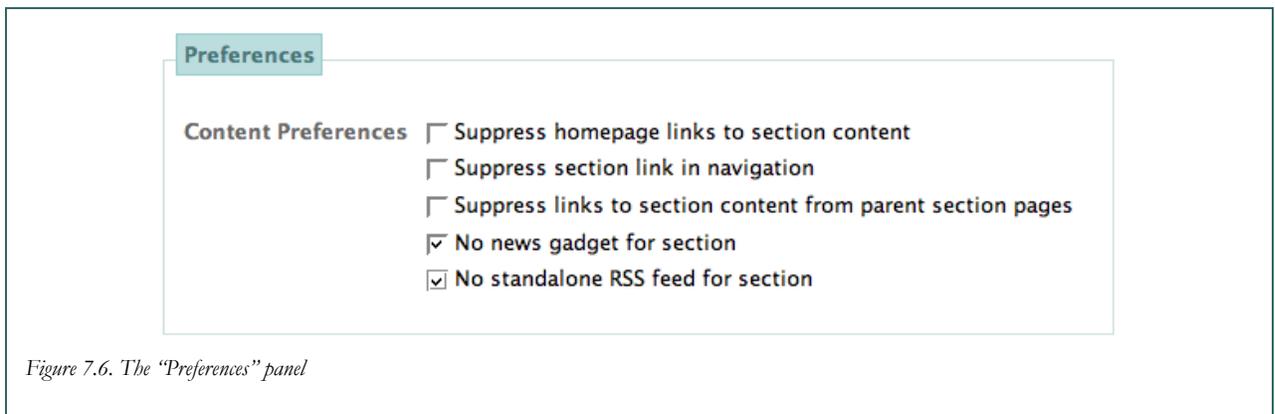


Figure 7.6. The “Preferences” panel

Editing display preferences

Display preferences control the finer details about how Big Medium displays your content. Preferences range from the format and number of links on certain pages, to image sizes in various contexts, to navigation styles, to custom JavaScript to include in your page headers. We’ll discuss the details of all of the various display preferences in [Chapter 10: Widgets](#); for now, we’ll just look at how you can customize the preferences for a section and its subsections.

Sections with custom display preferences have gears next to their names, and when you reveal the preference categories, the gear icon also indicates which categories have customizations. To clear the custom preferences for a section, click the “Delete” link next to the category of preferences you want to clear.



Figure 7.7. Click “Customize display preferences” to reveal preference categories

To edit a section’s display preferences, click the “Customize display preferences” link just below the section name in the main “Section Properties” screen to reveal the preference categories; click the name of the category to edit. The following page displays a form to edit the section’s preferences for that category.

Rebuild Pages After Making Changes

After you save changes to the section layout, section properties or display preferences, Big Medium prompts you to rebuild pages. This is necessary in order for your changes to be reflected on the public site. Just follow the provided link after you save your changes to launch the rebuild; for all but very large sites, this process takes only a few seconds. (Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can also rebuild pages at any time by selecting the “Rebuild All Pages” or “Rebuild Pages...” option from the “Layout” menu.)

Chapter

8

Themes and Site Designs

The preceding chapters have focused on creating, editing and organizing your site's content and message. The next few chapters will turn from substance to style, exploring how Big Medium assembles your content and, in the process, wraps it in a pretty package by applying your own design to the pages.

In order to do all that, of course, Big Medium first needs to know what your site is supposed to look like. That's where design themes come in.

A *theme* is a package of templates, styles and images that give Big Medium detailed instructions about the overall look and feel of the site: its layout, design, typography and imagery. The theme is the design shell that wraps around your content and gives your site its distinctive look.

Big Medium includes a modest library of prefab design themes to get you started (and down the road, you can also add your own themes to the library). You can use these themes as-is; they provide all of the design elements that you'll need to run your site. If you don't have a web designer or any HTML skills, the theme library can get you going on your own, and Big Medium's style editor will let you customize colors, fonts and some layout elements.

Big Medium's particular strength, however, is that it allows designers to implement highly unique, individual designs. Unlike systems that force you into a cookie-cutter design or a bland three-column layout, Big Medium gives you broad design latitude and can support just about any design.

Going beyond the theme library and taking full advantage of Big Medium's design features does require some cursory technical mojo. It's not rocket science, but you do need to know your way around page markup in order to create your own design templates. Basic to intermediate HTML know-how is required, and some knowledge of cascading style sheets (CSS) is helpful.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Before diving directly into the details of creating your own design theme, it's worth stopping in at the theme library. It's a useful resource not only for helping non-technical folks to get started by also for providing designers with examples of finished design themes.

The Theme Library

When an administrator adds a new site to Big Medium, she's taken to the theme library and prompted to select a theme. Choosing a theme lets you get straight into adding and editing content. It provides all of the design element that you need for a working Big Medium site so that you can get started right away.

You're never locked into a design theme. Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can change it at any time: Select a new theme; edit the theme with your own layout changes and style tweaks; or replace it entirely with your own built-from-scratch design theme. The change is applied instantly to all of the relevant pages of your site, giving you the ability to give your site a complete design makeover in a matter of seconds. Your site's content and organization remain untouched; you're just giving the site a change of clothes, a new look.

Apply a new theme to your site

To browse the theme library and apply a new theme to your site, select "New Theme" from the "Layout" menu. The theme library displays the installed collection of themes, each with two buttons: "Apply" and "Details." To apply the theme, click "Apply," or for more info and a preview screenshot, click "Details."

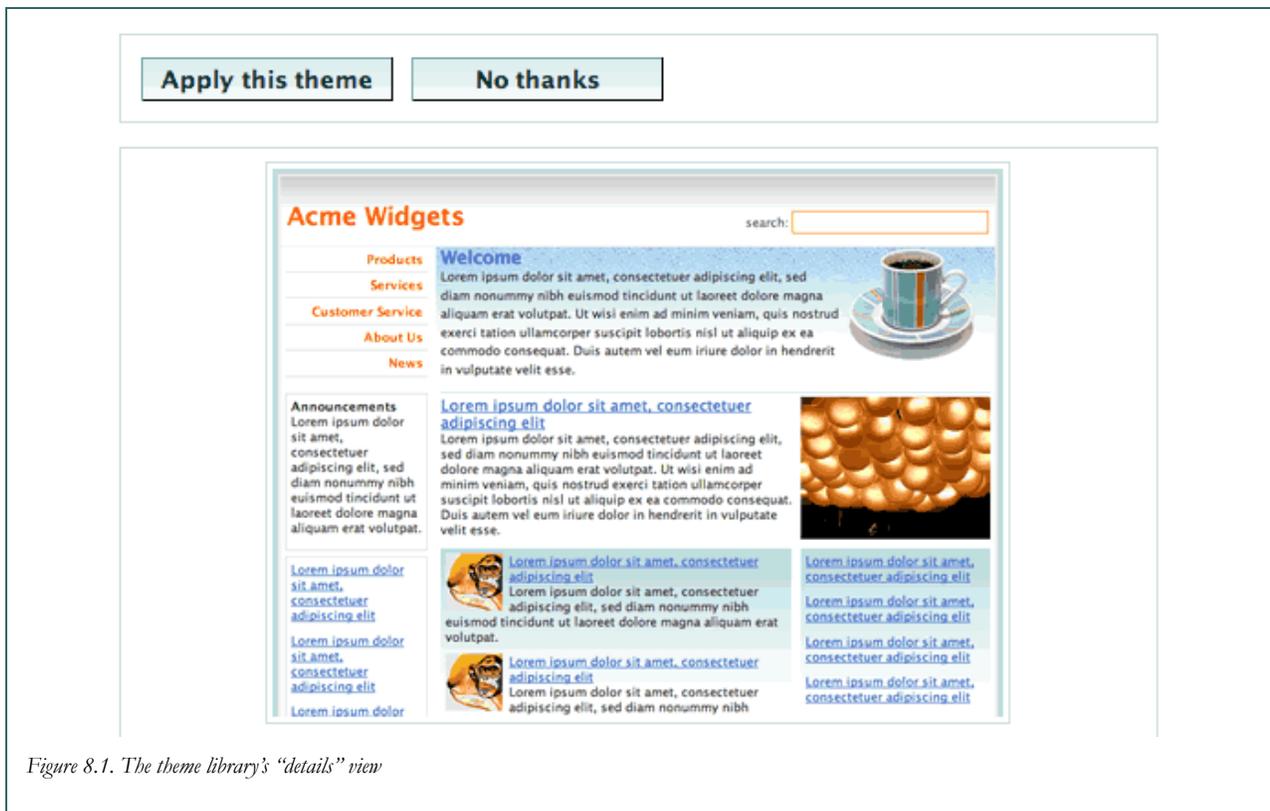


Figure 8.1. The theme library's "details" view

When you apply a new theme to the site, all current design templates and theme style sheets are removed, replaced by those of the new theme. To complete the transition to the new design, you should rebuild the site's pages: Select "Rebuild All Pages" from the "Layout" menu. And that's it, your site has a whole new look.

Removing the design theme

If you want to build your own design theme from scratch, you can strip a site of its design theme. To do this, select “Remove Theme” from the “Layout” menu.

Removing the site’s design theme strips the site of its design elements, leaving it “naked.” This process permanently deletes:

- The site’s custom templates
- The site’s theme style sheet
- Image files related to the theme design (only if you’re using a theme from the theme library)

Theme Ingredients

When you apply a theme from the theme library, Big Medium packages up all of the various elements that are needed to make a Big Medium site design and installs them for you. It all happens behind the scenes, no need to know the details.

If you prefer to whip up your own design rather than choosing one off the menu, however, you’ll need to get familiar with the ingredients. Like any other webpage, a Big Medium page consists of a hearty portion of HTML markup, a dash of CSS styles, and a dollop of design elements like images, Flash animation and JavaScript files.

When you create or edit a theme, you control these elements with *templates* (for HTML markup), the *theme style sheet* (for CSS) and external files uploaded to the server outside of Big Medium (for images, Flash, JavaScript, etc).

Templates

Templates are little more than modified HTML files. Sprinkled among the HTML are *widget* tags, the placeholders that tell Big Medium where to place certain content: “Put the headline here, the main text there, a list of links down here, the name of the site up there, an image gallery over here.” If you know how to build a page with HTML markup, you’ll find templates easy to understand.

There are several different types of templates, each defining the design of a different type of page (the homepage, main section pages, content detail pages, etc.). The next two chapters explore the details of creating these templates and how to use Big Medium’s many widget tags.

Theme style sheet

The theme style sheet defines the cascading style sheet (CSS) styles for the site. Some designs (and designers) rely on CSS more than others. Many sites use CSS to control the entire design and layout of the site, while others use it only for minor styling of fonts and colors. Either approach is fine with Big Medium; you can make your theme style sheet as complex or as simple as you like.

CSS styles can also help you to customize the appearance of Big Medium’s widget tags. [Chapter 10: Widgets](#) includes details about the CSS selectors that you can use to style the HTML that Big Medium inserts into your pages.

The site's styles can be further modified or extended via Big Medium's style editor, a WYSIWYG ("what you see is what you get") tool that lets you make a variety of font, color and layout changes without detailed CSS know-how.

We'll dig more deeply into Big Medium style tools in [Chapter 11: Styles](#).

External files

Most web designs include at least a few image files and occasionally some additional elements like Flash animations or JavaScript files. These design elements are separate from the page-specific images and media discussed in [Chapter 3: Editing Webpages](#). Unlike those elements, theme images and elements are part of the "shell" of the site and are common to all (or most) pages. Examples include a site logo graphic, background images, or a Flash animation in the header of the homepage.

These elements should be loaded to the site via FTP, outside of Big Medium and then referenced by the HTML in the templates. More on this in the next chapter about templates.

Add Your Own Themes to the Library

If you create your own theme with custom templates and/or a custom style sheet, you can add your theme to the library for use in other sites. If you have not yet created your own custom theme, or if you do not have an account with administrator privileges, feel free to skip ahead to the next chapter.

Saving a site's theme creates a new theme in the library with all of the site's custom templates, theme styles and, if you choose, external files. Accounts with administrator privileges can do this by going to "Layout>Save Theme in Library." This screen prompts you to provide details about your theme.



Are custom section templates saved?

Only the site's default master templates are saved to the library when you save a theme; any custom templates created for individual sections are not saved. If you want to copy a site's section structure and associated templates, consider "cloning" the site (see ["Cloning a Site"](#) in [Chapter 15: Managing Multiple Sites](#)).

Theme title

The "Theme Title" panel prompts you for a *theme name*, as it will appear in the theme library.

The *slug name* is the internal reference for the theme and may contain only letters, numbers, hyphens and underscores. Slug names must be unique. Choosing a slug name claimed by another theme in the library will replace that theme; Big Medium will ask if you really want to replace it before doing so.

Theme summary

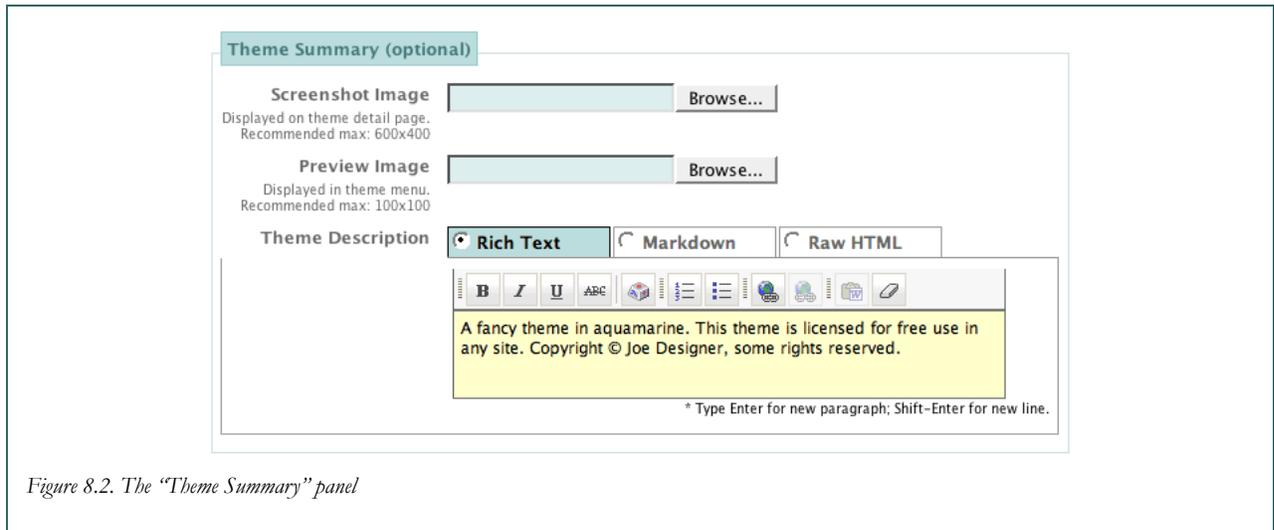


Figure 8.2. The “Theme Summary” panel

The “Theme Summary” panel allows you to provide other users with information about your theme before they apply it to their site. These fields are optional.

The *screenshot image* is displayed on the theme’s “details” page and should be used to provide a sneak peek of what the full design looks like. The *preview image* is displayed on the theme library menu to give a general idea of the theme’s sensibility, often a detail from the overall design. Big Medium suggests image sizes; if your server supports image resizing, Big Medium will reduce the images to the recommended size if necessary.

The theme description appears below the screenshot on the theme detail page. It can be used to describe the theme or provide license information if applicable.

Image and asset directory

Custom templates and stylesheets often include references to external files (or *assets*), including images, Flash movies, or JavaScript files. You can specify a single directory where those files are kept, and Big Medium will import those files into the saved theme. In order to do that, you need to provide both the URL and the directory path to that directory.

For example, say that you keep all of your images and other assets in this location:

```
http://www.example.com/images
```

...and say that this corresponds to this directory on your server:

```
/home/example/public_html/images
```

Those are the URL and directory path of your asset directory. When you provide those details, Big Medium will automatically import the files from directly inside that directory (but not from any nested directories).

The templates and style sheet in the saved theme will also be updated automatically to point to the correct location when the theme is applied to a site. The theme library is fairly clever about this; even if you refer to the directory only as “/images” or “. . . /images,” the templates will still be updated to resolve correctly when the theme is applied.

Designer info

Claim credit for your work by sharing your contact details. The “Designer Info” panel provides optional fields for the designer’s name, e-mail address and URL. These details are shown only on the theme’s “details” page and do not appear on the live site.

Removing a custom theme

Big Medium does not provide an interface for removing a custom theme after it is saved to the theme library. However, you can do this manually by deleting the theme directory via FTP. To do this, connect to your server and browse to the following directory:

```
badmin/themes/_custom
```

This directory stores all of your custom themes. To remove a theme, delete the directory with the slug name of the theme to delete. For example, if the theme to delete has the slug name “code-fancy,” you would delete this directory:

```
badmin/themes/_custom/code-fancy
```

Sharing a custom theme

You can share your custom theme with other Big Medium users outside of your individual installation. To distribute your theme for use in other installations, follow these steps:

1. **Locate your theme directory.**

Connect to your server via FTP, and browse to the following directory:

```
badmin/themes/_custom
```

Inside that directory, your theme is located in the directory with the slug name of the theme that you want to copy. For example, if the theme has the slug name “code-fancy,” your theme is located here:

```
badmin/themes/_custom/code-fancy
```

2. **Download the theme files.**

Set your FTP to “binary” mode, and download your theme directory.

3. **Zip and send.**

Zip the directory, and send it to your Big Medium comrades.

To install this theme in another installation, follow these steps:

1. **Unzip the theme files.**

Extract the theme directory from the zip archive.

2. **Locate the _custom theme directory.**

Connect to the new server via FTP and browse to the following directory:

`bmadmin/themes/_custom`

(You may need to create the `_custom` directory if it does not yet exist.)

3. **Upload the theme directory.**

Upload the theme directory to the `_custom` directory. For example, if your custom theme directory is named “code-fancy,” the final location of the directory should be:

`bmadmin/themes/_custom/code-fancy`

After uploading the directory, your installation is complete, and the new theme is now available in the theme library.

Templates

Templates give Big Medium instructions for how to build the HTML markup for all of your site's pages. By editing templates or creating your own from scratch, you specify the exact HTML for the page, defining its layout and structure.

How Big Medium Uses Templates

Ever play [Mad Libs](#)¹ when you were a kid? You remember: It was the word game that provided a bunch of stories with several missing words. Your friend asked you for words to fill in the blanks, and your suggestions created a unique storyline. (As a kid, you probably suggested words like "toilet" and "poo," and hilarity ensued.)

Mad Libs were *templates* for stories. The whole structure of the story was there, and you filled in the blanks to make the story complete. Big Medium's design templates are Mad Libs for HTML.

Big Medium has several types of template, each one responsible for creating a certain type of page. These templates are HTML pages, but like Mad Libs, they're not quite complete. The templates contain placeholders for content to be filled in later, "blanks" that need to be filled in to complete the story.

These blanks are called *widget tags*, and they indicate where Big Medium is supposed to place certain types of content. When Big Medium needs to create a certain type of page (the homepage, main section page, or an article page, for example), it uses the template for that page type, replacing all of the widget tags with the content that they specify to create the finished page. Anything in the template that's not a widget tag remains untouched; this is the HTML that is common to all pages of the site.

An article page, for example, might typically include a page headline, the body text, the author's byline, the publication date and an image gallery. To tell Big Medium exactly where to insert those content elements into the HTML, the article page template (or "content page") includes widget tags for each item.

Example 9.1 shows an excerpt from an example template that does exactly that.

¹ <http://us.penguin.com/static/packages/us/yreaders/madlibs/>

```
<%headline%>
<%gallery%>
<%byline%>
<p>
    <%pubdate%>
</p>
<%content%>
```

Example 9.1. Template excerpt with content widgets

The widget tags are the items in angle brackets and % percent placeholders: `<%widget%>`. For each page, Big Medium collects the relevant content elements that you entered into the page's edit screen, generates the appropriate HTML and inserts them into the page.

Consider a page named "Empire of the Antonines" by Edward Gibbon. When the widget tags from Example 9.1 are used as the center column of a layout, the result looks like this:

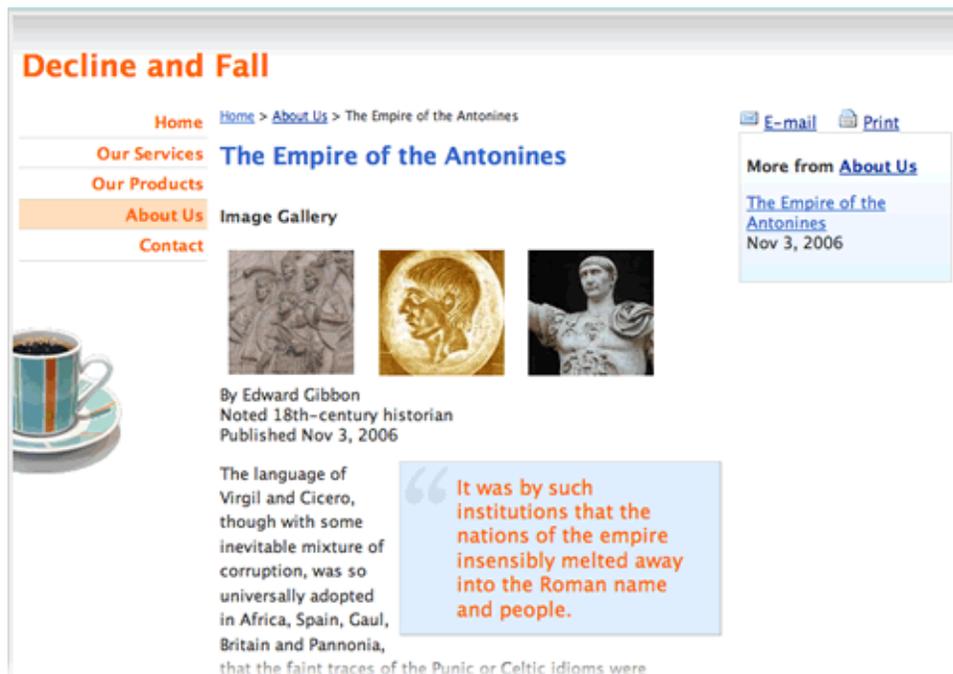


Figure 9.1. Content widgets on a live page

You can see that Big Medium has replaced our widget tags with content and HTML specific to the page:

- The `<%headline%>` widget has been replaced by "Empire of the Antonines."
- The `<%gallery%>` widget has been replaced by the page's image gallery.
- The `<%byline%>` widget has been replaced by "By Edward Gibbon, Noted 18th-century historian."

- The <%pubdate%> widget has been replaced by "Published Nov 3, 2006."
- The <%content%> widget has been replaced by the main page content, including a pullquote from the text.

The HTML around these widget tags define the surrounding structure; Big Medium pours the content into the page without disturbing the overall design.

The Template Editor

Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can browse and edit templates from Big Medium's template editor. To get there, select "Edit Templates" from the "Layout" menu.

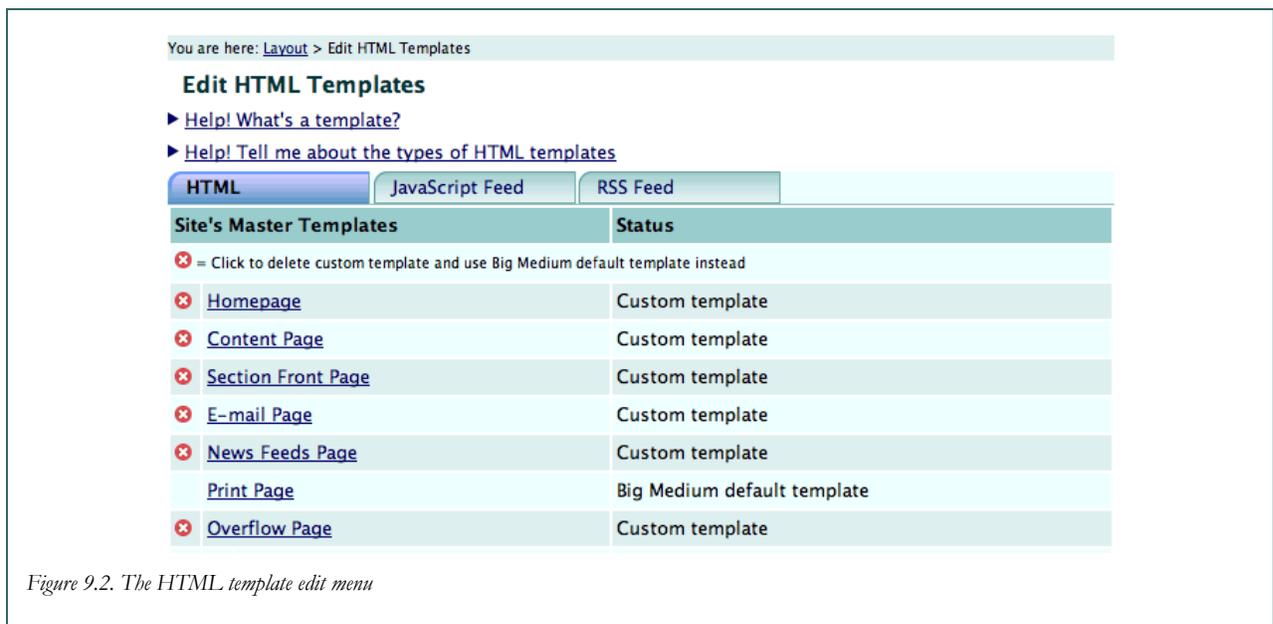


Figure 9.2. The HTML template edit menu

The list of the site's master templates is displayed at the top of the menu. Every type of Big Medium page has its own template, seven in all (we'll get to their descriptions a bit later). Big Medium has a set of default templates, which are typically used by the themes in the theme library, but you can customize or replace these templates with your own.

The "Status" column shows the source of the template; it says "Custom template" when you've made your own changes to the template, otherwise it tells you that you're using a "Big Medium default template."

Edit a template

To make changes to a template, click the name of the template to edit. This takes you to a screen containing a big text field where you can make your changes to the template text. Click Save when you're done.

To make your changes take effect on the live site, you need to rebuild the site's pages. Big Medium prompts you to do this after you save, offering you a link to rebuild pages. You can also rebuild pages at any time by choosing the "Rebuild All Pages" or "Rebuild Pages..." option from the "Layout" menu.

Delete a template

To revert to the default template, click the "X" delete icon next to your custom template. This deletes your custom template and goes back to Big Medium's default template.



Be careful!

Deleting a template is permanent and cannot be undone.

Section-specific templates

You use the site's master templates to define how you want most pages of the sites to look. But sites commonly need different designs for one or more sections. You can override a master template by adding a custom template for a section.

Section templates are listed below the master templates. This portion of the page lists all of the page's sections, along with the templates available for customization (not all templates can be customized). To reveal a section's templates, click the section name. Sections that have custom templates are indicated by gear icons. When you list a section's templates, it shows you the source of each template and provides a button for deleting custom templates, if any.

Custom Section Templates	Status
= Section has one or more custom templates	
= Click icon to delete section's custom template	
▶ News	
▼ Local/State	
Content Page	Using the site master template
Section Front Page	Custom template for this section
Overflow Page	Using the site master template
▶ Obituaries	
▶ Nation	
▶ Politics	

Figure 9.3. "Custom Section Templates" in the template editor

Sections inherit templates. When you apply a custom template to a main section, all subsections of that section start using that custom template, too. Subsections can in turn have their own custom template, overriding the parent section's template.

You can remove a section's custom template by clicking the "X" delete icon next to the custom template. The custom template is removed, and the section goes back to inheriting that particular template from its parent section.

The HTML Template Types

There are seven types of HTML templates, three of which can be customized at the section level:

Homepage	Controls the appearance of the site's homepage, the top-level welcome page for the site.
Content page	Controls the appearance of content detail pages, where your visitors go to read an item's full text. <i>This template can be customized at the section level.</i>
Section front page	Controls the appearance of the cover page for each content section. These pages are typically used as a kind of table of contents featuring links to pages assigned to the section. <i>This template can be customized at the section level.</i>
E-mail page	Controls the appearance of the form page that sends page links via e-mail.
News feeds page	Controls the appearance of the page that offers links to the site's RSS news feeds.
Print page	Controls the appearance of printer-friendly pages.
Utility page	Controls the appearance of miscellaneous utility pages, including search results, "overflow" link pages (where section links go when the section front page is full), the tips archive page and tag pages. <i>This template can be customized at the section level.</i>

Other Formats: RSS and Sitemap

Big Medium uses templates to generate RSS feeds and search-engine sitemaps, too. It's unlikely that you'll need to edit these, and this handbook focuses only on the HTML templates. That said, you can edit the other formats' templates by clicking the tab for those formats at the top of the template editor.

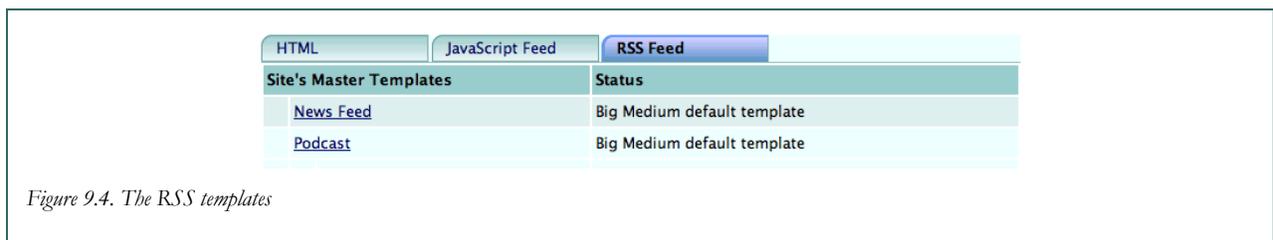


Figure 9.4. The RSS templates

Creating Templates with Your Own Design

To create Big Medium templates from your own design, start with a complete HTML page. If you already have a live website, start with the source code of existing pages for each of your templates. If you are designing a new site, create HTML mockups for each of the template page types.

External files: Images, Flash, JavaScript, etc.

Your HTML templates can contain any HTML that you like, including links and references to files outside of Big Medium. Most templates, for example, include at least a handful of image tags for the site logo, header graphic, background images, or any other images that appear in the design "shell" of the site. Your HTML can likewise include your own Flash animations, JavaScript files, you name it.

These external files and resources are not loaded through the Big Medium control panel. You should instead upload the files to your server separately, via FTP, to the location anticipated by your templates.

You should use "absolute" URLs to reference these files in your templates instead of "relative" URLs. An absolute URL points to the exact address of the file, while a relative URL points to a location relative to the current address. Not sure what this means? Just be sure that your URLs include the full URL for your files.

Say, for example, that you keep your images in a directory at `http://www.example.com/images`. Your URLs should take the form shown in Example 9.2.

```
<!-- use the full URL -->


<!-- or use the path from the domain's web root directory
      (note the leading slash in the URL) -->


<!-- but DO NOT use these relative formats -->


```

Example 9.2. Absolute and relative URLs for images

Good hygiene with your external files

If you plan to save your custom design in the theme library, you should keep all of your external files in the same directory.

That is, keep all of your images, Flash movies, JavaScript files and any other design resources in the same place (when saving a theme, Big Medium refers to this as your *asset directory*). Keep all of the files directly inside this directory; do not create additional directories inside your assets directory. Doing this allows Big Medium to import these files into the theme library when you save the theme.

For more about saving your design in the theme library, see [“Add Your Own Themes to the Library”](#) in [Chapter 8: Themes and Site Designs](#).

Sprinkle liberally with widget tags

When you have your HTML designs in hand, go through and identify the sections of HTML that you would like Big Medium to manage and update. Replace these HTML sections with Big Medium widget tags, until all of the content you would like Big Medium to generate is represented by the appropriate widget tags.

That's all there is to it. All that remains is to get familiar with the available widgets. The next chapter

provides a complete reference for Big Medium's widgets, and the default templates also provide good examples for how to use them. For now, we'll just mention a handful of common widgets.

Required: `htmlhead`

All of your Big Medium templates should include the `<%htmlhead%>` widget tag. This widget generates the `<!DOCTYPE>`, `<html>` and `<head>` tags for the pages, including some important Big Medium "housekeeping" HTML that helps Big Medium display your pages properly. This widget should completely replace everything above the `<body>` tag in your original HTML design. That means that the `<%htmlhead%>` widget should be the first line of all of your templates, followed by the `<body>` tag, so that the top of every template looks like Example 9.3.

```
<%htmlhead%>
<body>
```

Example 9.3. `<%htmlhead%>` should start every template

If you need to add your own custom HTML to pages' `<head>` tags, the `<%htmlhead%>` widget allows you to do that. See the `<%htmlhead%>` entry in the next chapter for details.

Navigation

The `<%navigation%>` widget displays links to the site's section and subsections, including dropdown menus if you like. For most sites, you'll want to include the `<%navigation%>` widget in all templates. You can indicate the orientation of the navigation (vertical or horizontal) with the `direction` attribute. For example:

```
<%navigation direction="horizontal"%>
```

You can also use the `<%breadcrumbs%>` widget to add "breadcrumb" navigation, the path to the current page from the home page.

Content

The `<%headline%>` widget displays a page's title in a large headline format. For most sites, you'll want to include this widget in all templates.

The `<%content%>` widget displays a page's full text. For most sites, you'll want to include this widget in these templates:

- Homepage
- Section front page
- Content page
- Print page
- Utility page

There are several widgets that display secondary content, and you'll commonly want to include them along with the `<%content%>` widget on the templates listed above, *except for the utility template* which should not include these widgets.

<code><%gallery%></code>	The page's image gallery, if any
<code><%related%></code>	A list of the page's related links, if any
<code><%byline%></code>	Author byline ("By Edward Gibbon")
<code><%authorblurb%></code>	The author's bio/description, if any
<code><%pubdate%></code>	The date the page was published to the site

Links

The homepage and section front pages are responsible for listing the top links for the entire site or specific sections, respectively. These two templates have a handful of special link widgets dedicated to this task. In most cases, the `<%links%>` widget is often all that you'll need to display the appropriate contextual links on these templates, but you can also add additional blocks of links with the `<%spotlight%>` and `<%morelinks%>` widgets. See the next chapter's entries for these widgets for details.

On section pages, use the `<%overflow%>` widget to display navigation to link archive pages when the section front page is full and can't display any more links.

Other pages can also display the latest links from the site or section, but they use different link widgets: the `<%latest%>` widget or the `<%quicktease%>` widget.

The Rest

There are plenty more widgets that can add additional functionality and content to your pages. The above summary is a round-up of the must-have fundamental widgets. The next chapter explores all of the widgets in detail.

Chapter

10

Widgets

This chapter is a guide to all of Big Medium’s widgets. The good news is that the chapter is comprehensive, plumbing the depths of all the widgets and the many options for customizing their display. That’s also the bad news; it doesn’t exactly make for light reading. Reading this chapter front-to-back is likely to induce drowsiness and blackouts. Do not operate heavy machinery while reading this chapter.

If you’re just getting acquainted with Big Medium and its widgets, you may find it useful to scan the “Customizing the Display of Widgets” and “Links” sections. Otherwise, you should use this chapter as a go-to reference to look up widgets or their CSS selectors as you need them.

As introduced in the previous chapter, *widgets* are the elements that do the work in your page templates, inserting page-specific content into your pages in the places where you’ve planted your widget tags.

The chapter organizes widgets by functional category:

- [Page header](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Content and images](#)
- [Section and tag navigation](#)
- [Homepage and site name](#)
- [Tips and announcements](#)
- [News feeds](#)
- [E-mail page](#)
- [Page footer](#)
- [Environment values](#)

Before diving into the widgets, we’ll start with a couple of general pointers for customizing their output.

Customizing the Display of Widgets

You can tweak and cajole your widgets via Big Medium’s HTML preferences as well as your own custom CSS styles.

Widgets and HTML Preferences

Most widgets have a set of preferences that can be used to customize their output to your exacting standards. These settings are available to accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges from the “HTML Preferences” screen in the “Settings” menu (or from the “Section Properties” screen to customize settings for individual sections). The preferences are divided into several categories, which group preferences by widget function and content.

Each widget entry in this chapter details any specific preferences that can be used to customize the widget’s output.

Widgets and CSS Classes

If you’re a web designer who’s hip to designing with cascading style sheets (CSS), you’ll find that Big Medium’s widgets provide you with a lots of CSS “hooks” to give you broad control over the look of your pages’ final HTML. Nearly every widget is wrapped in its own unique Big Medium class, and individual elements inside the widgets (links, images, etc) are in turn assigned their own classes.

Many widget entries in this chapter include sample HTML output for the widget and/or details about the CSS selectors that you can use to style the widget in your theme style sheet.

Page Header

<%htmlhead%>

The <%htmlhead%> widget is required in all Big Medium page templates in order to make the pages display properly. The widget generates the page’s <!DOCTYPE> declaration, <html> and <head> tags. The first two lines of every page template should consist of this widget, followed by the <body> tag.

```
<%htmlhead%>
<body>
```

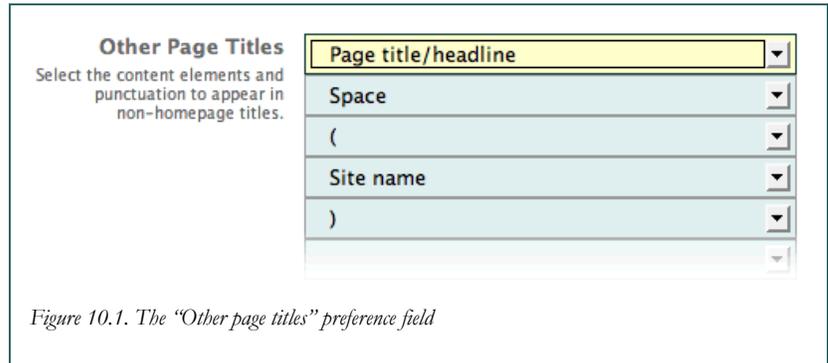
Example 10.1. <%htmlhead%> should start every template

The <head> tag of a page contains a variety of important supporting information for the page, including the page title, location of CSS style sheets, JavaScript libraries and other page metadata. The <%htmlhead%> widget generates and inserts all of this information for you; if you have your own custom HTML to include in the <head> tag, Big Medium allows you to add it in the site’s HTML preferences.

Settings

The output of the `<%htmlhead%>` widget can be customized in the “Document and Page Header” panel of the site’s HTML preferences:

DOCTYPE	This required element of HTML/XHTML pages tells browsers what type of markup your page uses. All markup generated by Big Medium will conform to the document type you select, and you should be sure that your templates do the same.
Language	Tells browsers and search engines the primary language of your site.
Search engine policy	Tell search engines whether or not they’re invited to index your site.
Homepage title	The text to insert into your homepage’s <code><title></code> tag.
Other page titles	Instructions for assembling the <code><title></code> tag of non-homepage pages. Select the content elements that you want, in the order that you want, from the dropdown menus.



Title tagline	This is the text used in <code><title></code> tags for the “site title tagline” element, available as an option in the “other page titles” field.
Additional HTML to include in header	Sites frequently need to include links to custom style sheets or JavaScript libraries in the <code><head></code> tag of their pages, and that’s what this setting does. Enter the HTML to include in the <code><head></code> tag, and Big Medium will add it for you.

Links

Big Medium’s link widgets display links to the site’s pages. They can be used to display the top links from the entire site or from a specific section. In combination with the site’s main navigation, these individual page links enable your visitors to explore your site’s content.

There are several link widgets, and it’s worth spending a little bit of time up front to discuss how they work and, in particular, the special role of the homepage and section pages in displaying links.

Homepage and section page links

The homepage and section front pages have a special set of link widgets that can be used only in the homepage and section page templates to display the top links for the entire site (for the homepage) or the current section (for section pages). These specialized link widgets form a group that can be used singly or in combination to display the pool of top links for the homepage or section page:

- `<%links%>` The main body of links
- `<%spotlight%>` The top “featured” link(s)
- `<%morelinks%>` Older or less important links

Your homepage and section templates can include one, two or all three of these widgets to display links on the page. If you want to display only a single list of links in the same identical format on the page, the `<%links%>` widget is all that you need in your template. The `<%spotlight%>` and `<%morelinks%>` widgets can be used to supplement the `<%links%>` widget and display the page’s links in more than one location on the page and/or in a different format.

These three widgets, in other words, comprise the “main list” of links on the homepage and section front pages. If present, the `<%spotlight%>` widget gets the section’s top links; the `<%links%>` widget gets the next set of links; and the `<%morelinks%>` widget displays the next set. All of them draw from the same pool of links, so they never duplicate each other.

`<%spotlight%>`
The top link(s) for the site or section; the featured page

`<%links%>`
The main body of links for the site or section

`<%morelinks%>`
Additional links, older or less important than `<%links%>` items

The screenshot shows the localnews.com homepage. Three red boxes highlight specific areas:

- The top story section, which includes a large image and a headline.
- The main body of links, which consists of a vertical list of article thumbnails with titles and brief descriptions.
- The 'more links' section, which is a smaller list of links located at the bottom of the main content area.

Figure 10.2. The link widgets

Say, for example, that you always want to give special “spotlight” treatment to the section’s top link, making it a featured link on the page by giving it a larger link image and putting it in a more prominent spot on the page than the other links. That’s where the `<%spotlight%>` widget comes in. The `<%spotlight%>`

widget takes the top link from the page's pool of links, displaying it in its own custom format, which you define in the widget's HTML preferences. The `<%links%>` widget then picks up with the next link and displays its list of links in the site's default link format.

Similarly, the `<%morelinks%>` widget can be used to display older or less important links. After the `<%links%>` widget has filled its quota, the `<%morelinks%>` widget displays the next set of links in the list, if any, using its own custom link format.

You can configure how many links each widget displays and in what format, as we'll discuss in each widget's reference entry. These main-list links are displayed in the site's link sort order, defined in the site's HTML preferences. The default settings sort links by priority (highest displayed first) and then by publication date (most recent displayed first). You can change the settings to other sort orders, like alphabetical by title.



What about archives? What if sections have more links than can be displayed?

When a section page is “full” and all of its link widgets have been filled with the top links for the section, Big Medium creates *overflow pages* with links to additional pages. The utility page template is used for these pages, and the links are displayed in that template's `<%content%>` widget. In this way, Big Medium allows your visitor to browse the complete catalog of your site's pages.

On section pages, the `<%overflow%>` widget places page navigation to these overflow pages (the widget is empty when there are no overflow pages).

By default, Big Medium builds up to five pages of overflow links for each section, but you can change this setting in the “Links” screen of the site's HTML preferences.

For large sites with thousands of pages, a limited number of overflow pages means that some pages may not be linked from the public site. These older pages do remain accessible via search, however, and they are also included in Big Medium's search-engine sitemaps so that search engines will continue to index these archive pages.

Displaying links on non-section pages

Other pages can display links, too, but they have to use widgets other than the section-page-only `<%links%>`, `<%spotlight%>` and `<%morelinks%>` widgets. We'll discuss the other widgets in more detail in their reference entries below, but for now these additional link widgets are:

- `<%latest%>`
- `<%news%>`
- `<%quicktease%>`

Link styles and structure

All of the link widgets share a similar structure, illustrated in Figure 10.3. Nearly all of the content elements for each link have a unique CSS class that allows CSS-savvy designers to create their own custom CSS rules to control the display of Big Medium’s links.

All of the links in the widget are contained in a single HTML `<div>` tag with a class that’s unique to the widget type (`bmw_links` for the `<%links%>` widget, `bmw_spotlightLinks` for the `<%spotlight%>` widget, `bmw_morelinksLinks` for the `<%morelinks%>` widget, etc.).

Inside this container `div` is the widget’s header text, if it has any (e.g., “Latest links in News” for the `<%latest%>` widget), followed by a series of `<div>` tags each of which belongs to the `bmw_link` class and contains the content for a single link, including its images, description, related links, etc. The specific content elements that are included in the link widget depend on the preference settings for the widget.

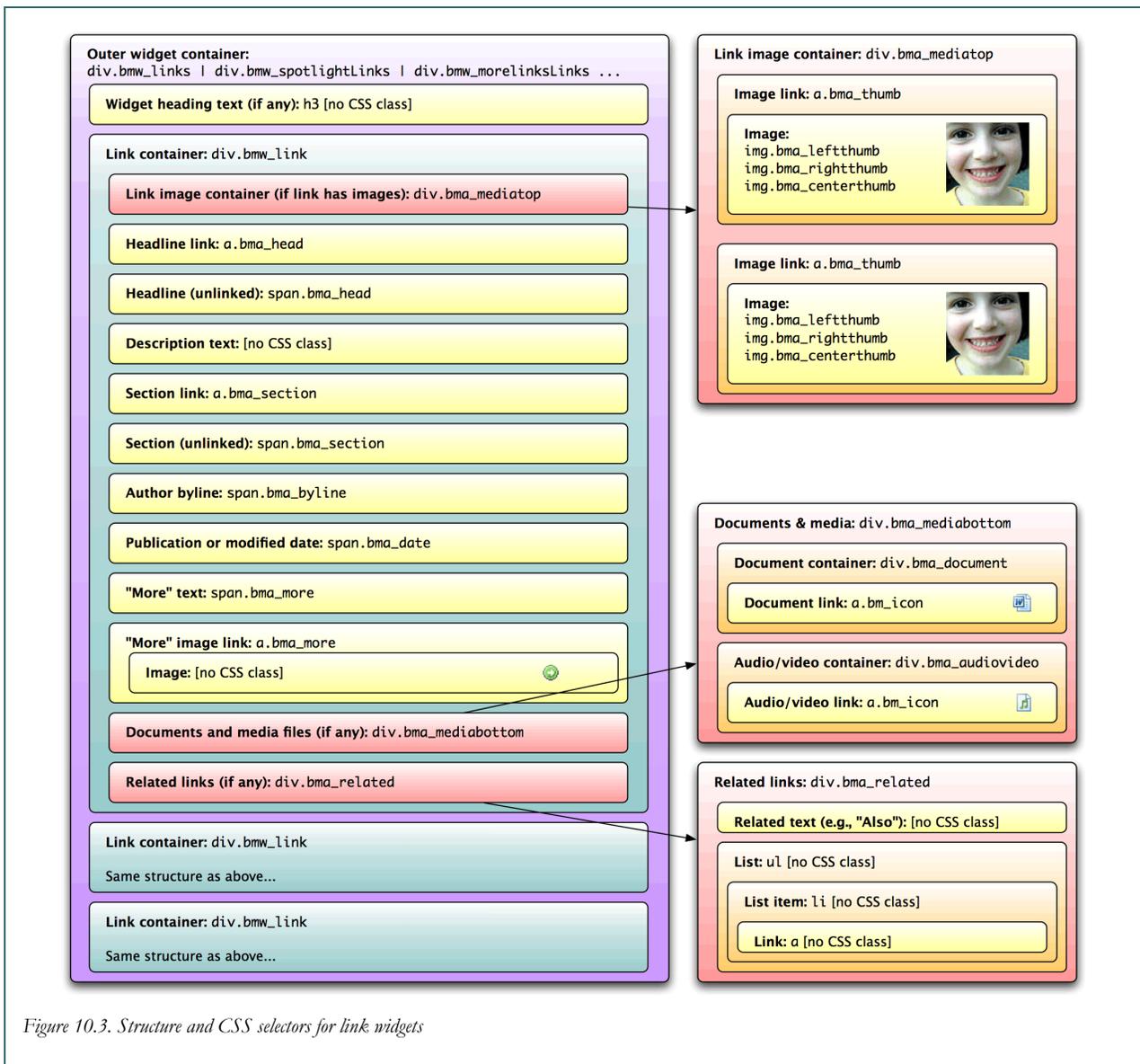


Figure 10.3. Structure and CSS selectors for link widgets

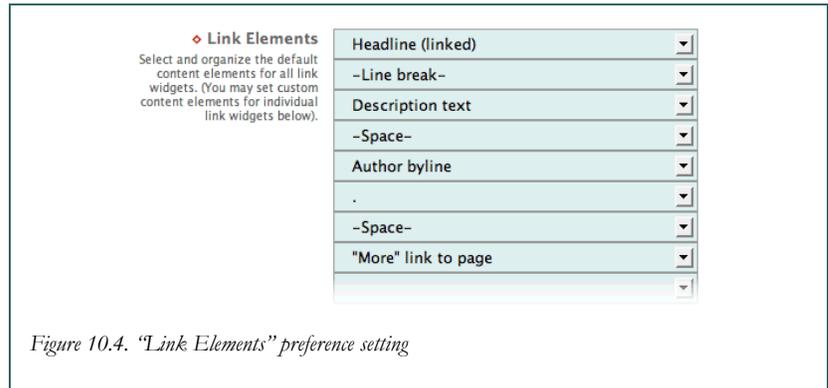
Shared link preferences

The link widgets share a common set of preferences in the “General” panel of the site’s “Links” HTML preferences. The widgets also have their own preference panel in same preference page, where some of these general preferences can be custom-tailored for the individual widget.

The common link preferences that can be set in the “General” panel:

Link elements

The content to include in each link. Select the elements (including space, line breaks and punctuation) that you want to include in the links from the dropdown menus in the order that you want the elements to appear.



Add byline line break

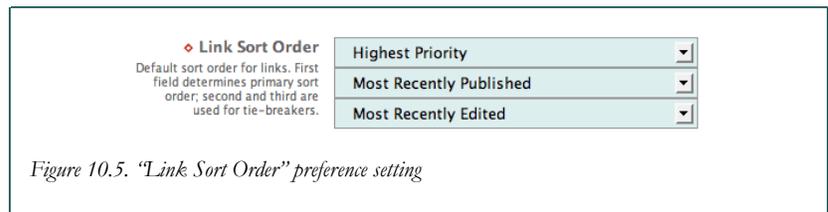
In addition to the elements specified above, you can also add line breaks that get included only if the link includes a byline. This option lets you add an extra line break before and/or after the byline, if there is one.

Add description line break

Same deal as for “add byline line break”: If a link has description text, this setting specifies whether you want to add an additional line break before and/or after the description.

Link sort order

The order in which links are listed. Select the primary sorting criterion in the first dropdown. In case of matching sort values, select second and third sorting criteria in the two dropdowns below that.



New windows

To open all links on the site in a new window, check the “Open links in a new window.” To prevent new windows from opening for certain links (like links to the site itself), include the start of those

protected URLs in the “Internal Links” field.



Figure 10.6. “New Windows” preference setting

Include related links	Include a page’s list of related links (if any) in links to the page by checking the “Include related links” option.
Related links text	The text heading that appears above related links, if any
Include time	If a widget’s link elements include the publication date or modified date, checking this option includes the specific time, along with the date.
“More” link text	The text to display in “more” links for widgets whose link elements include them
“More” link icon	The icon to display in in widgets whose link elements include the “more” link icon
Section text	The text format to use for displaying section/category info in links
Byline text	The text format to use in bylines (“By Alan Smithee”) for links

<%links%>

For homepage and section templates only. The <%links%> widget is the primary widget for displaying links on the homepage and section pages. If any of the spotlight family of widgets are also in the template, the <%links%> widget starts its list immediately after the <%spotlight%> link(s).

Settings

In addition to the shared settings described in the “Shared link preferences” section, the following settings are available in the “Widget: links” panel of the site’s “Links” HTML preferences:

Number of links	The maximum number of links to display in the <%links%> widget
Link image display	Alignment of images displayed in the <%links%> widget (“align left,” “align right,” “above link text” or “do not include image”)
Link image size	The size of images displayed in the <%links%> widget

Styles and structure

The structure of the <%links%> HTML follows the general link structure described in the “Link styles and structure” section; the outer <div> belongs to the `bmw_links` class. Here are some commonly used CSS

selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%links%>` widget:

`div.bmw_link` — Individual link block

`div.bmw_link a.bma_head` — Headline link

`div.bma_related ul`, `div.bma_related li` — List of related links

`div.bma_related a` — Related link text

`<%spotlight%>`

For homepage and section templates only. The `<%spotlight%>` widget displays the top link(s) from the main list of links and provides a useful way to give special treatment to “spotlight,” or featured, pages in the site or section. You can also choose to display the spotlight text link(s) separate from the spotlight image link(s) by using the `<%spotlighttext%>` and `<%spotlightimage%>` widgets, described below.

Settings

In addition to the shared settings described in the “Shared link preferences” section, you can customize these `<%spotlight%>` settings in the “Widget: spotlight” panel of the “Links” HTML preferences:

Number of links	The number of links to display in the <code><%spotlight%></code> widget
Link elements	To customize the <code><%spotlight%></code> link elements to be different than the default elements specified in the “General” panel of the links preference page, check the “Customize for this widget” checkbox and select the elements to include. To revert to the default values, uncheck the customize option.
Link image display	Alignment of images displayed in the <code><%spotlight%></code> widget (“align left,” “align right,” “above link text” or “do not include image”)
Link image size	The size of images displayed in the <code><%spotlight%></code> widget
Include related links	Check the “include related links” option to display spotlight pages’ related links, if any, below their spotlight links.
Require image	Check the “Only pages with a spotlight image may appear in the spotlight” option to require pages to have a spotlight image assigned in their edit pages in order to be included. This can be a useful way to control which pages are featured as spotlights.

Styles and structure

The structure of the `<%spotlight%>` HTML follows the general link structure described in the “Link styles and structure” section; the outer `<div>` belongs to the `bmw_spotlightLinks` class. Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%spotlight%>` widget:

`div.bmw_spotlightLinks div.bmw_link` — Individual spotlight link block

`div.bmw_spotlightLinks div.bmw_link a.bma_head` — Spotlight headline link

<%spotlighttext%>

For homepage and section templates only. The <%spotlighttext%> widget displays only the text portion of the spotlight link(s). The content is the same as the <%spotlight%> widget, except that the link image(s) are not included. This can be useful if your design places the featured image in a different location in the page than the text link, in which case you can use <%spotlighttext%> in combination with <%spotlightimage%>.

Settings

<%spotlighttext%> follows all of the same settings as the <%spotlight%> widget.

Styles and structure

<%spotlighttext%> follows the exact style and structure as the <%spotlight%> widget, including the containing <div> class, `bmw_spotlightLinks`.

<%spotlightimage%>

If used on a homepage or section page template, the <%spotlightimage%> widget displays the spotlight image(s), each linked to the spotlight page. No text is displayed, only the spotlight links.

If used on a content page template, the widget displays all of the page's images, if any, that are set to display with spotlight links.

Settings

The size of images and number of links displayed in <%spotlightimage%> are controlled in the “Widget: spotlight” panel of the site’s “Links” HTML preferences.

Styles and structure

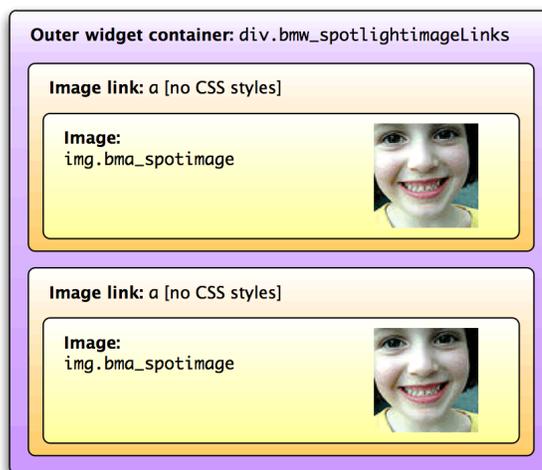


Figure 10.7. Structure and CSS selectors for <%spotlightimage%>

The `<%spotlightimage%>` widget consists of a single `<div>` tag (class: `bmw_spotlightimageLinks`) that contains all of the images (class: `bma_spotimage`) wrapped in their anchor tags. No alignment is applied to these images.

`<%morelinks%>`

For homepage and section templates only. The `<%morelinks%>` widget displays additional links on the page. It can be used in combination with `<%spotlight%>` and/or `<%links%>` to display links in more than one format or location on the homepage or section pages. `<%morelinks%>` picks up the list of links only after the `<%spotlight%>` and `<%links%>` widgets have filled their quotas. Its first link is the one that comes after the last link displayed by `<%links%>`.

Settings

In addition to the shared settings described in the “Shared link preferences” section, you can customize the following `<%morelinks%>` settings in the “Widget: morelinks” panel of the site’s “Links” HTML preferences:

Number of links	The number of links to display
Link elements	To customize the <code><%morelinks%></code> link elements to be different than the default elements specified in the “General” panel of the links preference page, check the “Customize for this widget” checkbox and select the elements to include. To revert to the default values, uncheck the customize option.
Link image display	Alignment of images displayed in the <code><%morelinks%></code> widget (“align left,” “align right,” “above link text” or “do not include image”)
Link image size	The size of images displayed in the <code><%morelinks%></code> widget
Include related links	Check the “include related links” option to display pages’ related links, if any, below their main link text.

Styles and structure

The structure of the `<%morelinks%>` HTML follows the general link structure described in the “Link styles and structure” section; the outer `<div>` belongs to the `bmw_moreLinks` class. Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%morelinks%>` widget:

`div.bmw_moreLinks div.bmw_link` — Individual block of link text

`div.bmw_moreLinks div.bmw_link a.bma_head` — Headline link

`<%overflow%>`

For section templates only. It’s good practice to include this widget on all section templates.

When all of the section’s “main list” widgets (`<%spotlight%>`, `<%links%>`, `<%morelinks%>`) have been filled, Big Medium creates *overflow pages* to link to all of the remaining links for the section. (These pages are generated using the utility template; the links are placed in that template’s `<%content%>` widget.)

The `<overflow%>` widget displays navigation links to the overflow page(s) for the section. The widget displays nothing at all if there are no overflow pages.



Figure 10.8. `<overflow%>` displays page navigation to overflow pages

Settings

These settings are found in the “General” panel of the “Links” HTML preferences.

Limit overflow pages	The maximum number of overflow pages to build for each section. Note that if there are more links in a section than can be displayed in the allotted number of pages, some pages will not be linked from the live site. However, those pages will continue to be available via search and will also be included in Big Medium’s search-engine sitemap so that search engines will continue to index them.
Overflow links per page	Number of links on each overflow page.
“Next” text	Edit the text to be displayed for next-page links.
“Previous” text	Edit the text to be displayed for previous-page links.

Styles and structure

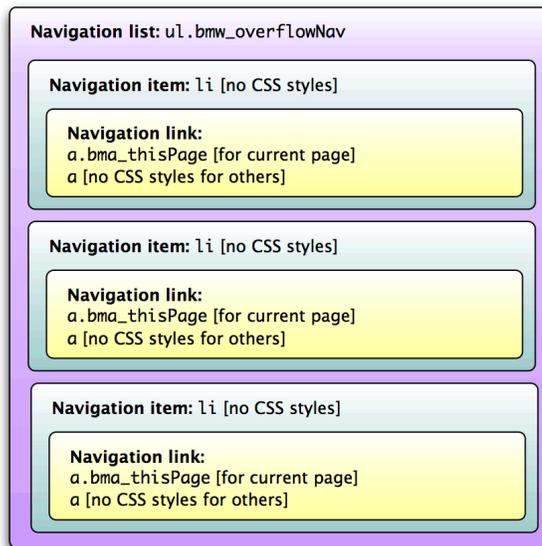


Figure 10.9. Structure and CSS selectors for `<overflow%>`

The overflow navigation is an unordered list (class: `bmw_overflowNav`), with each navigation link

composing a link item. Big Medium provides basic styles to make it into a simple navigation bar. The link to the current page has class `bma_thisPage`.

The following CSS selectors can be used to add your own custom styles to the overflow navigation:

`ul.bmw_overflowNav` — Containing list for the navigation

`ul.bmw_overflowNav li` — Navigation item

`ul.bmw_overflowNav a` — Navigation link

`ul.bmw_overflowNav a.bma_thisPage` — Navigation link for current page

<%latest%>

The `<%latest%>` widget can be used on any page template to display the top links from the site or any specific section (along with its subsections). By default, `<%latest%>` lists the top links from the current section.

Attributes

To specify the section from which `<%latest%>` should display links, add the `slug` attribute and the section's slug name. For example, to display links from an “About Us” section with slug name “about,” your widget tag would look like this:

```
<%latest slug="about"%>
```

To display the top links from the entire site, use the slug `@all` like so:

```
<%latest slug="@all"%>
```

If no slug is specified, `<%latest%>` displays the top links from the current section.

Settings

In addition to the shared settings described in the “Shared link preferences” section, you can customize the following `<%latest%>` settings in the “Widget: latest” panel of the site’s “Links” HTML preferences:

Number of links	The number of links to display
Link elements	To customize the <code><%latest%></code> link elements to be different than the default elements specified in the “General” panel of the links preference page, check the “Customize for this widget” checkbox and select the elements to include. To revert to the default values, uncheck the customize option.
Link sort order	To customize the sort order for <code><%latest%></code> , check the “Customize for this widget” checkbox and select your primary sort criterion, followed by second and third criteria in case of matching values. To revert to the default values from the “General” panel, uncheck the customize option.
Link image display	Alignment of images in the <code><%latest%></code> widget (“align left,” “align right,” “above link text” or “do not include image”)
Link image size	The size of images in the <code><%latest%></code> widget

Include related links

Check the “include related links” option to display pages’ related links, if any, below their main link text.

“Latest” text heading

The `<%latest%>` widget displays a text heading above its links. You can edit (or eliminate) the displayed text in the “Latest’ text heading” field.



Section properties and `<%latest%>`

As with many other widgets, you can customize the appearance of the `<%latest%>` widget for a specific section by editing the section properties for that section (see “[Section Properties: Section-specific preferences](#)” in *Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories*).

Note, however, that these section-property settings apply to the section feeding the widget, not necessarily where the widget is actually displayed. For example, say that you have a “News” section with the slug name “news” and you’re displaying the section’s links on the homepage like so:

```
<%latest slug="news"%>
```

Changing the section properties for the homepage will have no effect in this example. Instead, you need to change the section properties for the “News” section.

Styles and structure

The structure of the `<%latest%>` HTML follows the general link structure described in the “Link styles and structure” section; the outer `<div>` belongs to the `bmw_latestLinks` class. Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%latest%>` widget:

`div.bmw_latestLinks div.bmw_link` — Individual block of link text

`div.bmw_latestLinks div.bmw_link a.bma_head` — Headline link

`<%news%>`

You can specify a single section of your site as the “news” section, and all links from that section (and its subsections) will be displayed via the `<%news%>` widget.

This is functionally the same as `<%latest slug="news"%>` (where “news” is the slug name of the section you select as your news section), but the specific section to display is controlled from the HTML preferences, not the widget attribute. And `<%news%>` can have its own link elements, sort order and other assorted settings, giving it its own independent display format.

Settings

In addition to the shared settings described in the “Shared link preferences” section, you can customize the following `<%news%>` settings in the “Widget: news” panel of the site’s “Links” HTML preferences:

Number of links	The number of links to display
Link elements	To customize the <code><%news%></code> link elements to be different than the default elements specified in the “General” panel of the links preference page, check the “Customize for this widget” checkbox and select the elements to include. To revert to the default values, uncheck the customize option.
Link sort order	To customize the sort order for <code><%news%></code> , check the “Customize for this widget” checkbox and select your primary sort criterion, followed by second and third criteria in case of matching values. To revert to the default values from the “General” panel, uncheck the customize option.
Link image display	Alignment of images in the <code><%news%></code> widget (“align left,” “align right,” “above link text” or “do not include image”).
Link image size	The size of images in the <code><%news%></code> widget.
Include related links	Check the “include related links” option to display pages’ related links, if any, below their main link text.
News section	The section of the site whose links (as well as those of its subsections) should be displayed in the <code><%news%></code> widget.

Styles and structure

The structure of the `<%news%>` HTML follows the general link structure described in “Link styles and structure”; the outer `<div>` belongs to the `bmw_newsLinks` class. Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%news%>` widget:

`div.bmw_newsLinks div.bmw_link` — Individual block of link text

`div.bmw_newsLinks div.bmw_link a.bma_head` — Headline link

`<%quicktease%>`

The `<%quicktease%>` widget is well suited for displaying links to section-specific links on the homepage or section pages (although it can be used on other types of pages, too). If you need to display links by content category in your homepage or section page, or if you want to highlight certain sections in addition to the main list of links, a series of `<%quicktease%>` widgets is likely your best choice.

The `<%quicktease%>` widget is very similar to `<%latest%>`. It allows you to specify the section whose links you want to display (via the `slug` attribute), and it displays a text heading above the list of links (e.g., “[In Local News]”).

However, it also has additional HTML preferences that allow you to prevent links from appearing in a section’s `<%quicktease%>` widget if those links also appear in the main list of links on the homepage and/or main section page. This makes it useful, for example, if you want to use `<%links%>` to display the site’s main list of links on the homepage but you also want to highlight top pages from specific sections of the site via `<%quicktease%>`. By telling `<%quicktease%>` to suppress links that already appear in the main list of homepage links, you can avoid duplicate links on the page.

Attributes

To specify the section from which `<%quicktease%>` should display links, add the `slug` attribute and the section's slug name. For example, to display links from a Business section with slug name "biz," your widget tag would look like this:

```
<%quicktease slug="biz"%>
```

To display the top links from the entire site, use the slug `@all` like so:

```
<%quicktease slug="@all"%>
```

If no slug is specified, `<%quicktease%>` displays the top links for the current section.

Settings

In addition to the shared settings described in the "Shared link preferences" section, you can customize the following settings in the "Widget: quicktease" panel of the site's "Links" HTML preferences:

Number of links	The number of links to display
Link elements	To customize the <code><%quicktease%></code> link elements to be different than the default elements specified in the "General" panel of the links preference page, check the "Customize for this widget" checkbox and select the elements to include. To revert to the default values, uncheck the customize option.
Link sort order	To customize the sort order for <code><%quicktease%></code> , check the "Customize for this widget" checkbox and select your primary sort criterion, followed by second and third criteria in case of matching values. To revert to the default values from the "General" panel, uncheck the customize option.
Link image display	Alignment of images in the <code><%quicktease%></code> widget ("align left," "align right," "above link text" or "do not include image")
Link image size	The size of images in the <code><%quicktease%></code> widget
Include related links	Check the "include related links" option to display pages' related links, if any, below their main link text.
Hide homepage links	If a link is included in the homepage's main list of <code><%spotlight%></code> , <code><%links%></code> or <code><%morelinks%></code> links, it will not be included in the <code><%quicktease%></code> widget if you enable this option.
Hide main section links	If a link is included in the main list of links for the page's <i>main, top-level section</i> , it will not be included in the <code><%quicktease%></code> widget if you enable this option. For example, if a page is assigned to the "Basketball" subsection of the "Sports" section and appears on the main Sports section page, it will not be included in the <code><%quicktease%></code> widget for Basketball.

“Quicktease” text heading

The `<%quicktease%>` widget displays a text heading above its links. You can edit (or eliminate) the displayed text in the “Quicktease’ text heading” field.



Section properties and `<%quicktease%>`

As with many other widgets, you can customize the appearance of the `<%quicktease%>` widget for a specific section by editing the section properties for that section (see [“Section Properties: Section-specific preferences”](#) in *Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories*).

Note, however, that these section-property settings apply to the section feeding the widget, not necessarily where the widget is actually displayed. For example, say that you have a “News” section with the slug name “news” and you’re displaying the section’s links on the homepage like so:

```
<%quicktease slug="news"%>
```

Changing the section properties for the homepage will have no effect in this example. Instead, you need to change the section properties for the “News” section.

Styles and structure

The structure of the `<%quicktease%>` HTML follows the general link structure described in “Link styles and structure”; the outer `<div>` belongs to the `bmw_quickteaseLinks` class. Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%quicktease%>` widget:

`div.bmw_quickteaseLinks div.bmw_link` — Individual block of link text

`div.bmw_quickteaseLinks div.bmw_link a.bma_head` — Headline link

Content and Images

All content and image widgets may be used on any type of page template. Preference settings for these widgets are available in the “Detail Page” and “Images” pages of the site’s HTML preferences.

`<%headline%>`

The `<%headline%>` widget displays the page’s title in a bold headline format. It can also be configured to display the page description as a subhead. See also the [`<%title%>`](#) widget.

Settings

Subhead, To add subheads to your pages, check the “Include page description as subhead below main headline” option in the “Widget: headline” panel of the site’s “Detail Page” HTML preferences. The text of the subhead is the page’s description text.

HTML output

```
<h2 class="bmw_headline">This is the headline</h2>
```

If the `<%headline%>` widget is configured to display subheads, the HTML changes like so:

```
<h2 class="bmw_headline">This is the headline</h2>  
<h3 class="bmc_subhead">This is the subhead</h3>
```

`<%content%>`

On most page types, the `<%content%>` widget displays the page's main text, including secondary design elements like pullquotes, images and media. These secondary elements are displayed within the page's main text according to the settings entered for each element in the page's edit screen (above the content, aligned with a certain paragraph, or below the content), and the same goes for its horizontal alignment (default, left, center or right).

The `<%content%>` widget also displays the one-click editing bar (visible only to site editors) above the main text. For more on one-click editing, see [“One-click editing: A shortcut from the live site”](#) in *Chapter 3: Editing Webpages*.

The `<%content%>` widget has a slightly different role on the utility page template, which plays a pinch-hitter role for displaying miscellaneous page tapes. On that page, the `<%content%>` widget displays the primary content for whatever type of page is being displayed. (For example: In overflow link pages, `<%content%>` displays the links; in tip archive pages, `<%content%>` displays all of the site's tips; on tag pages, `<%content%>` displays the links for that tag.)

Settings

The following settings are located in the “Widget: content” panel of the site's “Detail Page” HTML preferences.

Media alignment	Sets the default alignment (left, center or right) for pullquotes, images and other media elements that can be embedded in page text. This setting can be overridden and customized by individual media elements in the page's edit screen.
Show tags	Checking this option lists the page's tags, if any, below the <code><%content%></code> text. The layout of the tag list is identical to the output of <code><%tags%></code> .
"Edit Page" Text	Text of one-click editing links
"New Page" Text	Text of one-click editing links
"Hide Edit Links" Text	Text for hiding one-click editing links

The following settings are located in the “General” panel of the site's “Images” HTML preferences.

Page image size	Sets the size of images to use in the <%content%> widget.
Enlarged image size	Clicking on images displayed by the <%content%> widget displays a larger version of the image. This option sets the size of that enlarged image.
“Enlarge image” text	Sets the image rollover text that is displayed to indicate that the image can be enlarged.

Styles and structure

Figure 10.10 shows the structure of the <%content%> widget and its embedded media elements.

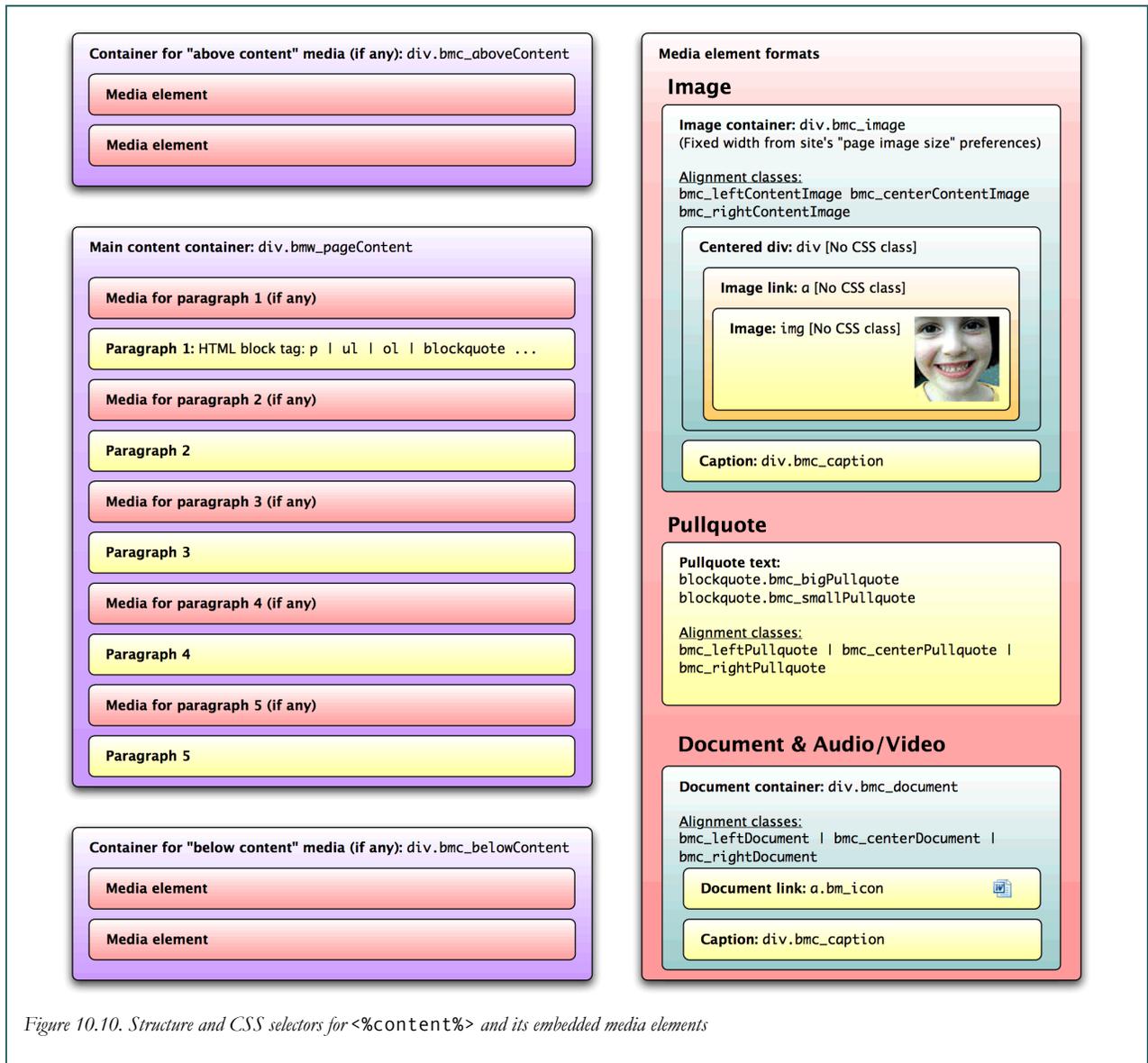


Figure 10.10. Structure and CSS selectors for <%content%> and its embedded media elements

The main content of the `<%content%>` widget is contained in a `<div>` tag with class `bmc_pageContent`. If the page has media elements (images, pullquotes, documents or audio/visual files), those elements are inserted into the content immediately before their associated paragraphs. If the page has media elements assigned to appear above or below the content, a `<div>` with class `bmc_aboveContent` or `bmc_belowContent` is added above/below the main content `<div>`.

Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%content%>` widget:

- `div.bmw_pageContent` — The page text
- `div.bmc_image` — Container for images and associated captions
- `blockquote.bmw_bigPullquote` — Pullquotes with large text
- `blockquote.bmw_smallPullquote` — Pullquotes with small text
- `div.bmc_document` — Container for documents and associated captions

`<%comments%>`

The `<%comments%>` widget displays visitor comments posted to the page, if any, followed by a form allowing visitors to post their own comment. The form accepts Markdown formatting to add links and formatting to their text.¹ (See [Appendix D: Editing Text with Markdown](#) for details about Markdown.)

Submitted comments are added to the page after following the screening steps specified in the site’s HTML preferences. For example, you can choose to have messages screened for spam via the Akismet web service, or you can opt to have all messages held for review before being posted to the public site.

Comments may be reviewed and edited by accounts with publisher, webmaster or administrator privileges via the “Edit Comments” options in the control panel’s Edit menu. See [“E-mail alerts”](#) in [Chapter 13: Account Management](#) for more details.



Can Big Medium alert me to new comments?

Yes. You can subscribe to e-mail alerts for new and/or moderated comments from the “My Accounts” screen. See [“Editing and reviewing visitor comments”](#) in [Chapter 3: Editing Webpages](#) for more details.

It’s recommended that at least one person receive alerts for moderated comments. This allows you to respond quickly to comments that have been held for your review.

Settings

Settings for the `<%comments%>` widget are set in the “Widget: comments” panel of the site’s “Visitor Comments” HTML preferences.

¹Comment text is “sanitized” after being converted to Markdown to prevent malicious HTML or JavaScript from being added to your pages. Also, the `rel="nofollow"` attribute is added to all links; this tells search engines not to index the linked page, eliminating an incentive for PageRank-hungry spammers to add junk comments to your pages.

Power switch	This enables/disables comments. When disabled, a “comments are closed” message is displayed instead of the comment form (see “No Comments’ Text” below). This option affects all pages of the site; you can enable/disable comments on individual pages via the “Page Preferences” panel of each page’s edit screen.
Moderate comments	When checked, all comments are held for review and must be approved by an account with publisher privileges or better before they will be added to the public site.
Akismet	When checked, all comments will be submitted to the Akismet anti-spam web service ² before being added to the site. If Akismet identifies the content as spam, the message will be marked as junk and chucked into the spam bin. Spam messages are deleted automatically after 15 days. In order to enable Akismet, a Big Medium administrator must have provided an Akismet API key in the “Settings>Big Medium Server Info” screen. For more info, see Appendix B: Spam Prevention with Akismet .
Akismet server trouble	If checked and Big Medium cannot connect to the Akismet service, all comments will be held for review (even if the “moderate comments” option is not enabled).
Comment heading	The heading text that appears above the list of comments.
Number caption	Appears above the comments, listing the number of comments.
Add comment link	The text of the link that prompts visitors to add their own comment and links to the comment form at the bottom of the comment list.
“No Comments” text	The text displayed when comments are disabled.
Form heading	The heading text that appears above the comment form.
Form caption	The caption text that appears above the comment form.
Name label	The label for the name field of the comment form.
E-mail label	The label for the e-mail field of the comment form.
URL label	The label for the URL field of the comment form.
Format instructions	Text of link pointing to Markdown formatting info.
Remember me	The label for the “remember me” checkbox in the comment form.
Submit button	The text to display in the submit button of the comment form.
Preview button	The text to display in the preview button of the comment form.
Held for review: Heading	The heading of the confirmation page telling visitors that their comment has been held for review.
Held for review: Text	The text of the confirmation page telling visitors that their comment has been held for review.

² <http://akismet.com/>

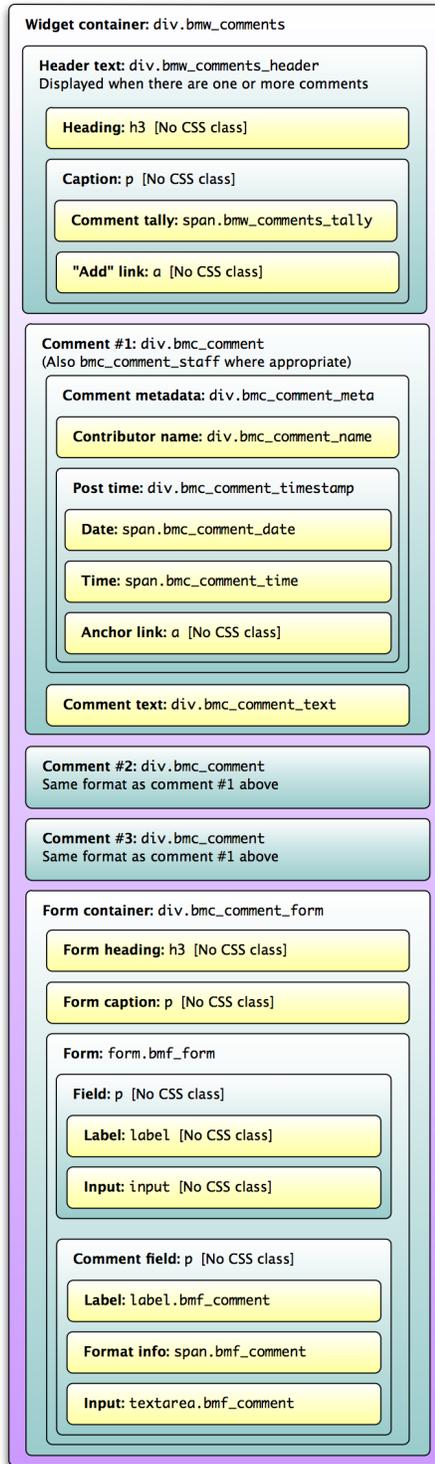


Figure 10.11. Structure and CSS selectors for <%comments%>

In addition, the comment form includes a “challenge question” to help prevent automated spam submissions to your comment forms. You can change the question and required response in the “Spam” screen of the site’s HTML preferences. When selecting your question, be sure to pick one that has only one obvious answer.

Styles and structure

The `<%comments%>` widget is contained in a `<div>` tag with class `bmw_comments`.

Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%comments%>` widget:

`div.bmw_comments` — The outer container for `<%comments%>`

`div.bmw_comments h3` — Headings for the comment list and the comment form

`div.bmc_comment` — Container for an individual comment

`div.bmc_comment_staff` — Container for an individual comment posted by a user whose email address corresponds to an account with privileges at the site.

`div.bmc_comment_meta` — The metadata “strip” that appears above all comments

`div.bmc_comment_name` — Contributor’s name

`div.bmc_comment_timestamp` — Post time of the comment

`div.bmc_comment_text` — Comment text

`form.bmf_form label` — Field labels for comment form

`form.bmf_form input` — Input field for comment form

`form.bmf_form textarea` — Comment field for comment form

`<%tags%>`

The `<%tags%>` widget displays a comma-separated list of the page’s tags. Each tag is linked to a “tag page” which displays links to all pages sharing the tag. If the page has no tags, then nothing is displayed.

To display links to *all* of the site’s tag pages, see “`<%tagcloud%>`” in the “Section Navigation, Search and Tags” section of this chapter.

Settings

Settings for the `<%tags%>` widget are set in the “Widget: tags” panel of the site’s “Tags” HTML preferences.

Tag label, The text label that appears just before the tag list.

Styles and structure

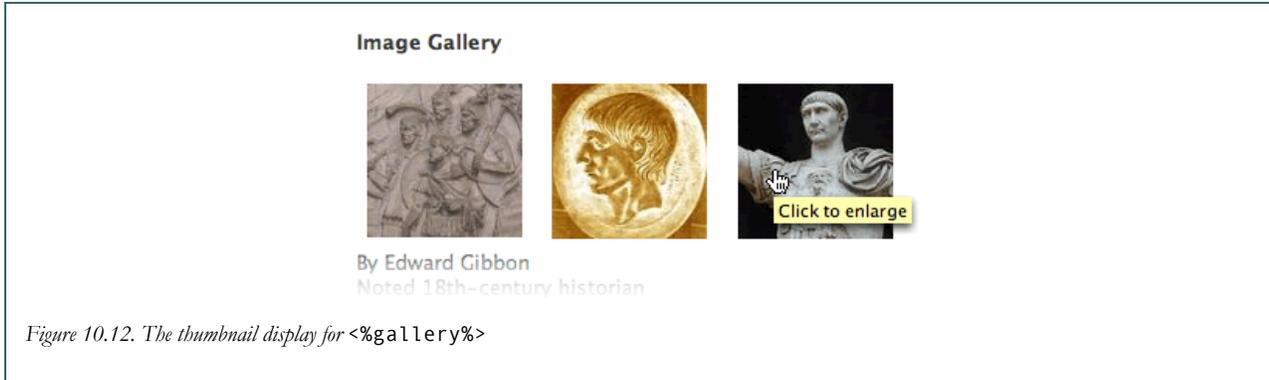
Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%tags%>` widget:

`p.bmw_tags` — The outer container for `<%tags%>`

`p.bmw_tags a` - Individual tag link

<%gallery%>

The <%gallery%> widget displays the page’s image gallery. This gallery is composed of images that have been added to the page in its edit screen and set to “Image gallery” for their page position. The order of the gallery images is determined by the priority setting of each image; the highest-priority image is displayed first.



The image gallery is a series of thumbnail images which, when clicked, display a large version of the image; the screen behind the image is dimmed, creating a lightbox effect.³ This also triggers a slideshow feature (Figure 10.13): You can move forward and backward in the image gallery by clicking to the right and left of the enlarged image. To dismiss the slideshow, click the “X” at the lower right.

Attributes

These attributes may be used to override the default settings in the site’s “Images” HTML preferences:

size The size to use for the gallery’s thumbnail images. Options are: *thumbnail* (60x60), *xsmall* (100x100), *small* (200x200), *medium* (400x400), *large* (600x600), *xlarge* (800x800) and *original*. If custom image sizes have been added to the site via the “[Site Image Formats](#)” screen, those custom sizes may also be used by referencing the size’s dimensions.

```
<%gallery size="xsmall"%> <!-- x-small image size: 100x100 -->
<%gallery size="60x100"%> <!-- custom format: 60 high x 100 wide -->
```

direction Sets the orientation of the image gallery: *horizontal* or *vertical*.

```
<%gallery direction="horizontal"%>
<%gallery direction="vertical"%>
```

caption If set to a “true” value, captions will display below the thumbnail images. No matter what you set here, captions always display in the enlarged slideshow view. **Be careful:** Displaying the caption can cause display weirdness if you have more than one row of thumbnails.

```
<%gallery caption="1"%> <!-- include the caption -->
<%gallery caption="0"%> <!-- do not include the caption -->
```

³This lightbox effect was pioneered by the talented [Lokesh Dhakar](http://www.huddletogether.com/) [http://www.huddletogether.com/], whose open-source [Lightbox JS project](http://www.huddletogether.com/projects/lightbox2/) [http://www.huddletogether.com/projects/lightbox2/] provided the starting point for this feature.

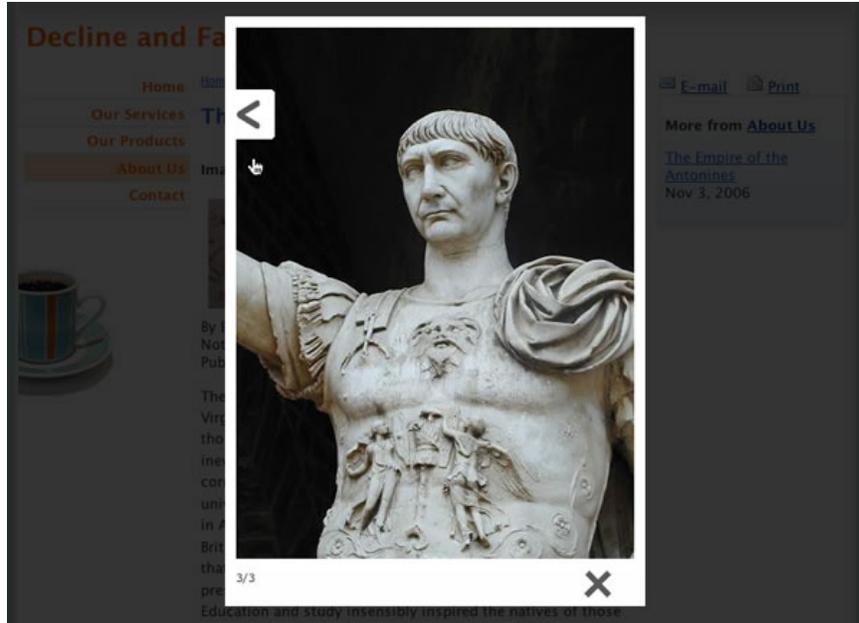


Figure 10.13. The `<%gallery%>` slideshow and lightbox effect

Settings

Settings for the `<%gallery%>` widget are set in the “Widget: gallery” panel of the site’s “Images” HTML preferences. These set the defaults, although they can be overridden by attributes in the widget tag.

Heading text	By default, <code><%gallery%></code> displays a text heading above the gallery thumbnails. You can edit (or delete) this text in this field.
Image size	The size to use for the gallery’s thumbnail images. (The size of the enlarged slideshow image is set in the “Enlarged image size” setting in the “General” panel of the site’s “Images” HTML preferences.)
Orientation	Sets the thumbnail display to either horizontal or vertical.
Image captions	If checked, this option displays captions below the thumbnail images (no matter what, though, captions are always displayed in the slideshow view). Be careful: Displaying the caption with thumbnail images can cause display issues if you have more than one row of thumbnails.

Styles and structure

The `<%gallery%>` widget is contained in a `<div>` tag with class `bmw_gallery` as shown in Figure 10.14.

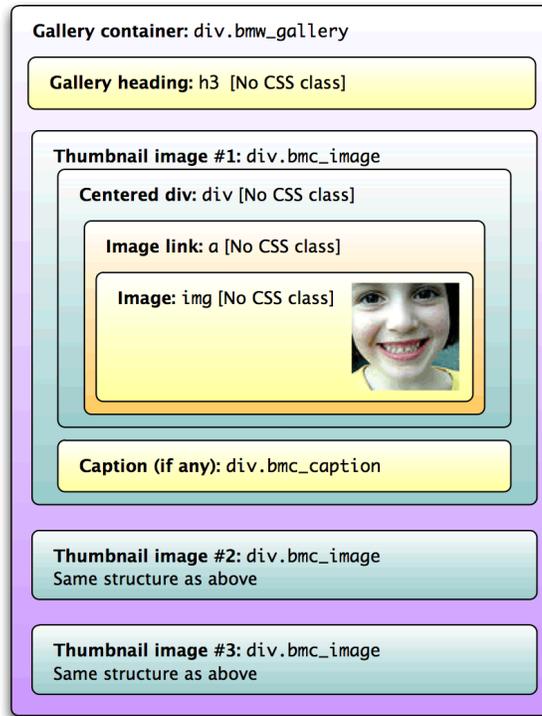


Figure 10.14. Structure and CSS selectors for `<gallery%>`

Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<gallery%>` widget:

`div.bmw_gallery` — The outer container for `<gallery%>`

`div.bmw_gallery h3` — The heading text

`div.bmw_gallery div.bmc_image` — Container for each thumbnail image

`div.bmw_gallery div.bmc_caption` — Thumbnail caption text, if any

`<images%>`

The `<images%>` widget allows you to display various sets of images assigned to the page. The widget can be used to display all of the page's images or just a subset. The `<images%>` widget is particularly useful as a supplement (or alternative) to the `<gallery%>` widget when you want to feature images outside of the main column of body text.

The widget works somewhat like the `<gallery%>` widget but allows more flexibility in selecting the set of images to display. Although images in the widget can be enlarged by clicking on them, `<images%>` does not have the slideshow feature as `<gallery%>` does to advance automatically through the set of images.

Attributes

limit Limits the set of images to the type of image specified, based on the image's page position as set in the page's edit screen. If no limit value is assigned, the `<%images%>` widget displays all of the page's images.

```
<%images limit="other"%> <!-- images set to "other position on page" only -->
<%images limit="hidden"%> <!-- images set to "do not display on page" only -->
<%images limit="body"%> <!-- images set to display within body text -->
<%images limit="above"%> <!-- images set to "above text" only -->
<%images limit="below"%> <!-- images set to "below text" only -->
<%images limit="gallery"%> <!-- gallery images only -->
```

Example 10.2. The `<%images%>` limit attribute

size The size of images to display. Options are: *thumbnail* (60x60), *xsmall* (100x100), *small* (200x200), *medium* (400x400), *large* (600x600), *xlarge* (800x800) and *original*. If custom image sizes have been added to the site via the [“Site Image Formats”](#) screen, those custom sizes may also be used by referencing the size's dimensions.

```
<%images size="medium"%> <!-- medium image size: 400x400 -->
<%images size="60x100"%> <!-- custom format: 60 high x 100 wide -->
```

direction Sets the orientation of the image display: *horizontal* or *vertical*.

```
<%images direction="horizontal"%>
<%images direction="vertical"%>
```

caption If set to a “true” value, captions will be displayed below the images. No matter what you set here, captions are always displayed in the enlarged view.

```
<%images caption="1"%> <!-- include the caption -->
<%images caption="0"%> <!-- do not include the caption -->
```

Styles and structure

The HTML output of the `<%images%>` widget follows the same structure as shown for `<%gallery%>` in Figure 10.14, except that the containing `<div>` belongs to class `bmw_images`.

Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%images%>` widget:

`div.bmw_images` — The outer container for `<%images%>`

`div.bmw_images div.bmc_image` — Container for each image

`div.bmw_images div.bmc_caption` — Caption text, if any

<%byline%>

The <%byline%> widget displays the author byline for pages with one or more authors. Author names in the byline can be linked to an e-mail form (the default), an e-mail address or the author’s website.

If there are multiple authors and one or more of them has a title to display, the authors are separated by two line breaks. If no authors have titles, the authors are separated by commas.

```
By Andy Griffith
  Sheriff, Mayberry Township

Barney Fife,
  Sheriff’s Deputy, Mayberry Township

Gomer Pyle
  Mechanic, Wally’s Filling Station
```

Example 10.3. Multiple authors, with titles

```
By Andy Griffith, Barney Fife, Gomer Pyle
```

Example 10.4. Multiple authors, no titles

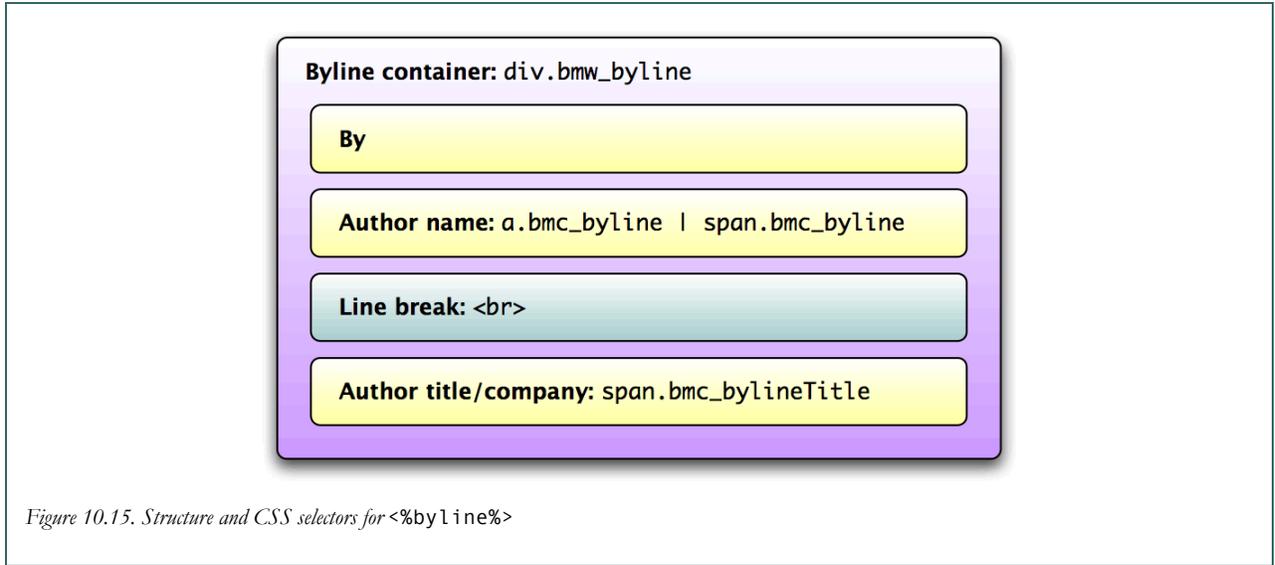
Settings

Settings for the <%byline%> widget are located in the “Widget: byline” panel of the “Detail Page” HTML preferences.

Byline text	The text that precedes the author’s name in the byline. For example, <i>By</i> is the byline text in “By Edward Gibbon.”
Title/company	Check the “Include title and company in byline” option to display authors’ title/company info, if any.
Link destination	If an e-mail address or website URL has been provided for the author, the <%byline%> widget will display a link to that destination based on the setting of this field. Accepted values are: <i>e-mail address</i> . (<code>mailto</code> link), <i>e-mail form</i> (e-mail address is never displayed), <i>author’s website</i> or <i>no link</i> .

Styles and structure

The <%byline%> widget is wrapped in a <div> tag (class: `bmc_byline`). The author name is in a <a> tag (if linked) or (if unlinked) of class `bmc_byline`. The author’s title and company, if any, are wrapped in a tag of class `bmc_bylineTitle`.



Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<byline%>` widget:

`div.bmw_byline` — Container for the entire widget

`.bmc_byline` — Author name

`.bmc_bylineTitle` — Author’s title and company

`<%authorname%>`

The `<%authorname%>` widget displays the page’s author name(s), if any, with no additional HTML.

`<%authoremail%>`

The `<%authoremail%>` widget displays the author’s e-mail address, if any, with no additional HTML. If a page has multiple authors, the widget finds the first author with an e-mail address and uses that address.

`<%authorlink%>`

The `<%authorlink%>` widget displays a text link (the default text is “Contact [AUTHOR NAME]”) with a link to the author’s link destination (e-mail form, e-mail address or website URL). If there are multiple authors, a link is provided for each author. No link is displayed for authors who don’t have an e-mail address or website URL.

Settings

Settings for `<%authorlink%>` are found in the “Detail Page” HTML preferences.

Link text Set the text to be displayed in the `<%authorlink%>` widget in this field in the “Widget: authorlink” panel.

Link destination `<%authorlink%>` follows the link destination setting for `<byline%>` in the “Widget: byline” panel.

Styles and structure

When displaying a link for only one author, the widget consists of a link wrapped in a `<div>` with class `bmw_authorlink`:

```
<div class="bmw_author_link">
  <a href="...">Contact Harold Ross</a>
</div>
```

For multiple authors, the widget consists of an unordered list `` with class `bmw_authorlink`:

```
<ul class="bmw_author_link">
  <li><a href="...">Contact William Shawn</a></li>
  <li><a href="...">Contact Tina Brown</a></li>
  <li><a href="...">Contact David Remnick</a></li>
</ul>
```

These CSS selectors can be used to style the `<%authorlink%>` widget:

`.bmw_author_link` — Container for the widget

`.bmw_author_link a` — Author link

`<%authorblurb%>`

The `<%authorblurb%>` widget displays the *blurb* (a bio or description), if any, for the page's authors as you might commonly find at the end of magazine articles. The text of this description is entered in the page's edit screen, in the edit box for each author.

of the emperors pervaded without an effort the wide extent of their dominions, and was exercised with the same facility on the banks of the Thames, or of the Nile, as on those of the Tiber.

Edward Gibbon was an English historian and member of Parliament. His most important work, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* was published in six volumes between 1776 and 1788.

Figure 10.16. `<%authorblurb%>` example

Styles and structure

The `<%authorblurb%>` widget is wrapped in a `<div>` (class: `bmw_authorblurb`), and each author's blurb text is in turn wrapped in its own `<div>` (class: `bmc_blurb`).

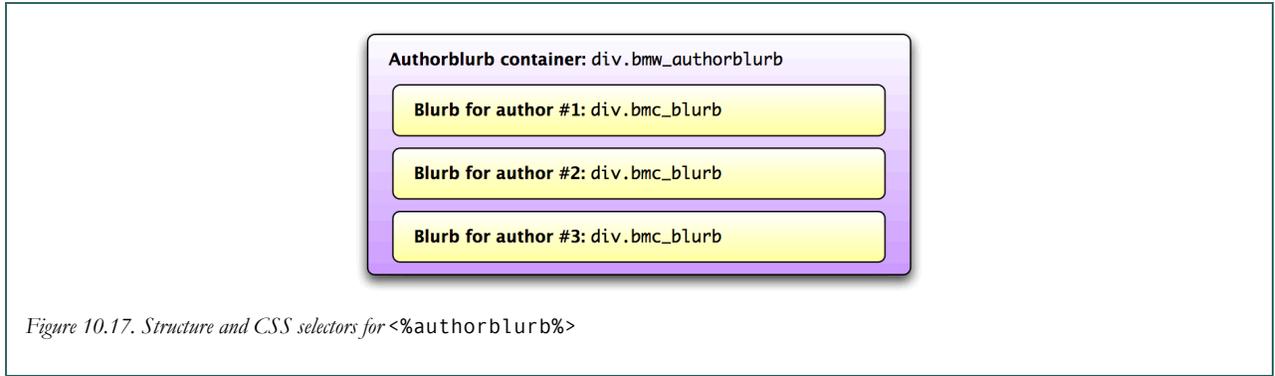


Figure 10.17. Structure and CSS selectors for `<authorblurb>`

These CSS selectors can be used to style the `<authorblurb>` widget:

`div.bmw_authorblurb` — Container for the widget

`div.bmc_blurb` — Individual author’s blurb text

`<title>`

The `<title>` widget displays the page’s title as-is, with no additional HTML tags. See also the [<headline>](#) widget.

`<description>`

The `<description>` widget displays the page’s description text as-is, with no additional HTML tags

`<pubdate>`

The `<pubdate>` widget displays the date and (optionally) time when the page was published. The widget uses the date and time formats set in the site’s [“Site Properties”](#) screen from the “Settings” menu.

Settings

Settings for the `<pubdate>` widget are in the “Widget: pubdate” panel of the site’s “Detail Page” HTML preferences.

Include time Checking this option includes the time of day when the page was published.

“Published” text This field determines the text displayed by the widget; the default setting is: “Published [DATE]”

HTML output

```
<span class="bmw_pubdate">Published Nov 3, 2006</span>
```

<%modified%>

The <%modified%> widget displays the date and (optionally) time when the page was last modified. The widget uses the date and time formats set in the site’s [“Site Properties”](#) screen from the “Settings” menu.

Settings

Settings for the <%modified%> widget are in the “Widget: modified” panel of the site’s “Detail Page” HTML preferences.

Publication day	Checking this option prevents the widget from displaying the modification date if it’s the same day as the publication date. This allows you to have both the <%pubdate%> and <%modified%> widgets while preventing duplication when the dates are the same.
“Updated” text	This field determines the text displayed by the widget; the default setting is: “Updated [DATE]”
Include time	The <%modified%> widget follows the <%pubdate%> “include time” setting in the “Widget: pubdate” panel. Checking this option includes the time of day when the page was published.

HTML output

```
<span class="bmw_modified">Updated Nov 3, 2006</span>
```

<%related%>

The <%related%> widget displays the page’s related links, if any, as assigned in the “Related Links” panel of the page’s edit screen.

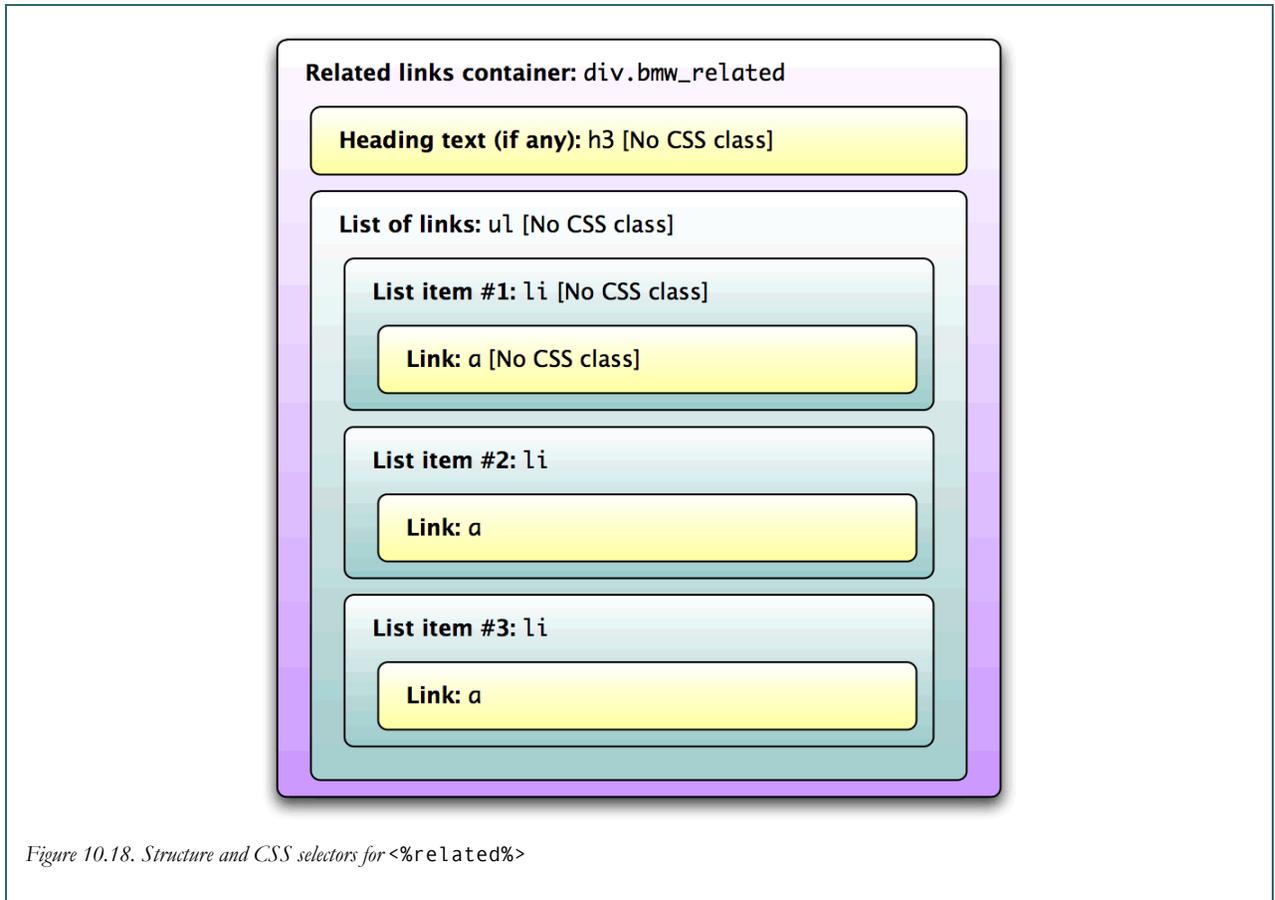
The widget keeps links up-to-date for any related links assigned in the edit screen’s “This Site” tab: If a target page moves, the link is updated; if a target page is unpublished or deleted, its link is removed; if a target page is published, its link is added. (This feature applies only to “This Site” links. “Elsewhere” links are not updated in this manner.)

Settings

The text heading that appears above related links can be edited or eliminated in the “Widget: related” panel of the site’s “Detail Page” HTML preferences.

Styles and structure

The <%related%> widget is wrapped in a <div> (class: `bmw_related`) and consists of a <h3> heading and a list of links.



These CSS selectors can be used to style the `<%related%>` widget:

`div.bmw_related` — Container for the widget

`div.bmw_related h3` — Text heading

`div.bmw_related ul` — List containing the related links

`div.bmw_related a` — Individual link

`<%emailpage%>`

The `<%emailpage%>` widget displays a link to the page’s “E-mail this page” feature, allowing your site’s visitors to send e-mail to friends with a link to the page along with a brief description and their own comment.

Settings

The `<%emailpage%>` settings are found in the “Widget: emailpage” panel of the site’s “Detail Page” HTML preferences.

E-mail icon The `<%emailpage%>` widget displays an icon followed by link text; this setting lets you select the icon.

Link text Set the text of the link in this field. The default is “E-mail.”

Styles and structure

The `<%emailpage%>` widget consists of a `` tag (class: `bmw_emailpage`) containing the e-mail icon and link text, each linked to the page’s “E-mail this page” screen.

These CSS selectors can be used to style the `<%emailpage%>` widget:

`span.bmw_emailpage` — Container for icon/text links

`span.bmw_emailpage a` — Link

`<%printpage%>`

The `<%printpage%>` widget displays a link to the page’s printer-friendly version.

Settings

The `<%printpage%>` settings are found in the “Widget: printpage” panel of the site’s “Detail Page” HTML preferences.

E-mail icon The `<%printpage%>` widget displays an icon followed by link text; this setting lets you select the icon.

Link text Set the text of the link in this field. The default is “Print.”

Styles and structure

The `<%printpage%>` widget consists of a `` tag (class: `bmw_printpage`) containing the print icon and link text, each linked to the page’s printer-friendly version.

These CSS selectors can be used to style the `<%printpage%>` widget:

`span.bmw_printpage` — Container for icon/text links

`span.bmw_printpage a` — Link

`<%pagetools%>`

The `<%pagetools%>` widget is a shortcut for displaying the page’s “tool” links. It’s functionally identical to:

`<%emailpage%>` `<%printpage%>`

Section Navigation, Search and Tags

The navigation widgets provide various mechanisms to allow your visitors to search and browse to the section pages of your site and by moving up and down the section hierarchy.

<%navigation%>

The <%navigation%> widget is Big Medium’s primary navigation element, used to create navigation-bar menus for the site’s top-level sections and up to three levels of subsections.

By default, Big Medium builds the <%navigation%> widget as a set of dropdown menus. If you’re a CSS-savvy designer, however, you can tell Big Medium not to apply any styling so that you can generate your own custom navigation from the widget’s list-based markup.⁴

Attributes

The `direction` attribute sets the orientation of the navigation to either horizontal or vertical. If no `direction` is specified, the default orientation from the site’s HTML preferences is applied.

```
<%navigation direction="horizontal"%>
<%navigation direction="vertical"%>
```

Example 10.5. The <%navigation%> widget’s direction attribute

Settings

The settings for the <%navigation%> widget are found in the “Widget: navigation” panel of the site’s “Navigation” HTML preferences.

Default orientation	Sets the default orientation of the navigation to either horizontal or vertical.
Vertical style	Sets the style of navigation (<i>e.g.</i> , “Dropdown menu”) that is applied to vertical navigation. In practice, selecting a navigation style adds CSS style rules to the site’s style sheet. If you prefer to create your own navigation

⁴In recent years, a significant portion of the developer community has come to embrace the use of simple HTML lists to represent site navigation. Navigation is, after all, a list of links to the site’s sections, and because you can nest lists inside of other lists, the technique also represents subnavigation nicely. Big Medium follows this approach, using lists to create the HTML for the <%navigation%> widget.

In most cases, of course, you don’t want your navigation to look like a bullet list, and that’s where CSS styles come in. You can use CSS to change the way that the links look on the page. By default, Big Medium styles these navigation lists to display as dropdown menus, but there are many possible alternatives that can be realized with your own custom styles.

If you’re new to using lists as navigation HTML, there are many online resources that can help you get up to speed. I recommend these: [“CSS Design: Taming Lists”](http://alistapart.com/stories/taminglists/) [http://alistapart.com/stories/taminglists/] is a very good introduction to using CSS to transform lists, and [Listamatic](http://css.maxdesign.com.au/listamatic/) [http://css.maxdesign.com.au/listamatic/] offers recipes for a variety of navigation styles, including [nested lists for subnavigation](http://css.maxdesign.com.au/listamatic2/) [http://css.maxdesign.com.au/listamatic2/].

style, select “None: Unstyled list” to remove Big Medium’s navigation-specific CSS rules, leaving you with a blank slate to add your own CSS.

Horizontal style	Sets the style of navigation that is applied to horizontal navigation. As noted for the vertical style setting, you can remove the styles completely by selecting “None: Unstyled list.”
Main navigation depth	The number of subsection levels to include in the navigation. The navigation always includes, at a minimum, all active top-level sections. You can also choose to include their subsections, up to three levels of them, as subnavigation items.
Include homepage	Check this option to include a link to the homepage along with the site’s top-level sections.

Styles and structure

Figure 10.19 shows a diagram of the `<%navigation%>` widget’s HTML structure.

The `<%navigation%>` widget is contained in a `<div>` tag with class `bmw_navigation` as well as a second class indicating its orientation: `bmh_hnav` for horizontal navigation, or `bmh_vnav` for vertical navigation. The `<div>` contains a `` list whose `` list items contain the section links and, where appropriate, another nested `` list for the section’s subnavigation. Each list item has a class name based on the slug name of the section it represents: `bmh_sec-SLUGNAME`

You can use the following CSS selectors to create your own custom styles for the `<%navigation%>` widget. These selectors all use the `bmw_navigation` class, which will apply to all `<%navigation%>` and `<%subnavigation%>` widgets. You can target the effect of these selectors by replacing `bmw_navigation` with `bmh_hnav` (for horizontal navigation) or `bmh_vnav` (for vertical navigation).

`div.bmw_navigation` — Outer container for the navigation

`div.bmw_navigation ul` — List container for each level of navigation (all top-level sections, all of one section’s subsections, etc.)

`div.bmw_navigation ul ul` — List container for subsections levels only

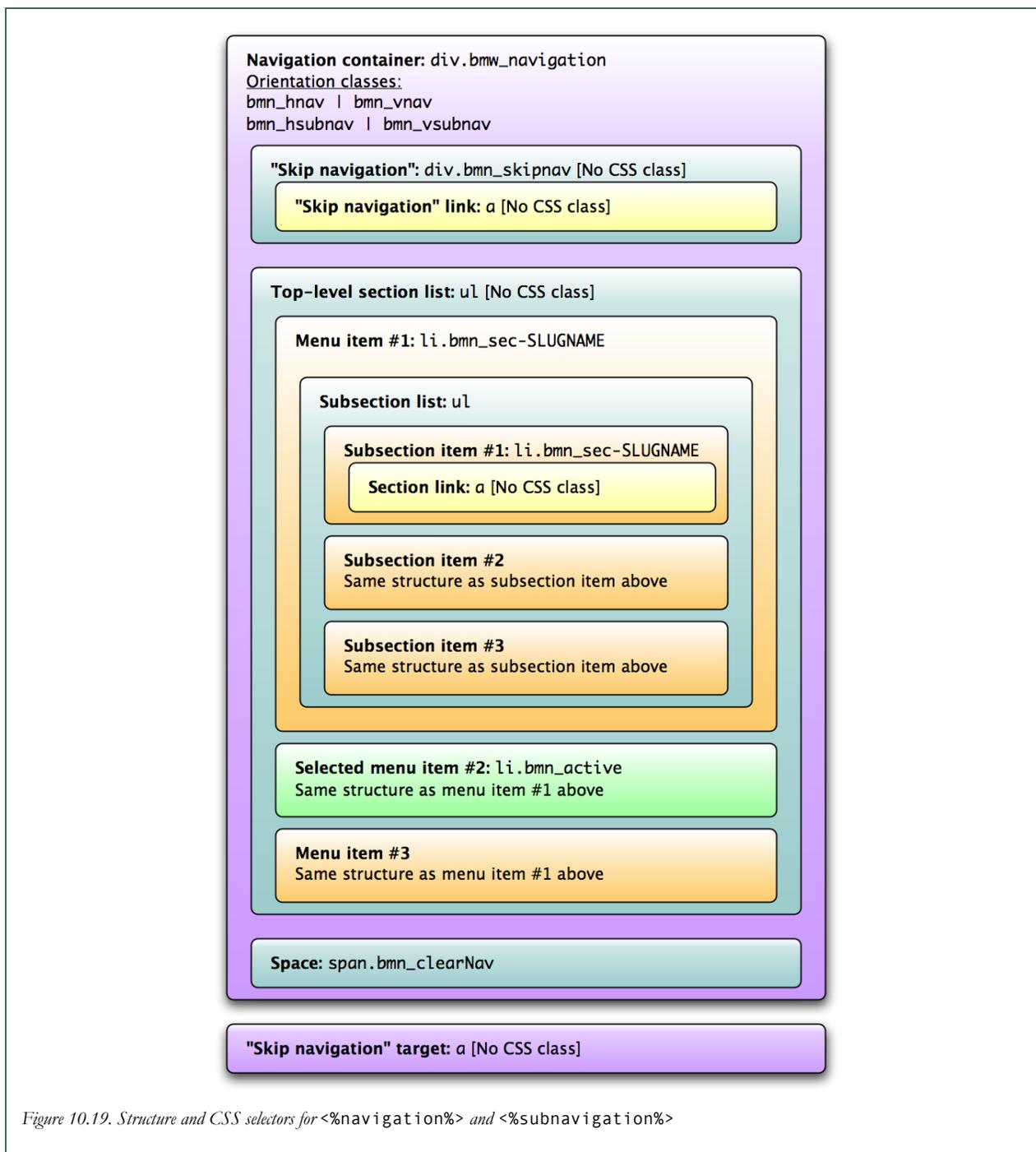
`div.bmw_navigation li` — Menu item

`div.bmw_navigation li.bmh_active` — Menu item for current section

`li.bmh_sec-SLUGNAME` — Menu item for a specific section; replace SLUGNAME with the section slug

`div.bmw_navigation li.bmh_hover`, `div.bmw_navigation li:hover` — Menu item, hovered

`div.bmw_navigation a` — Section link



<%subnavigation%>

The <%subnavigation%> widget basically clones the <%navigation%> widget with one key difference: While <%navigation%> displays the navigation for the top-level sections of the site, <%subnavigation%> displays the navigation for the subsections of the section that you specify, along with up to three additional levels of subsections.

This widget is typically used in combination with <%navigation%> and can be useful when you want to

display the main section navigation in one portion of the page (*e.g.*, across the top of the page) but show subsection navigation in another area (*e.g.*, in the left column).

By default, the `<%subnavigation%>` widget displays navigation links to the subsections of the current section. If you're browsing a page in a newspaper site's "Sports" section, for example, the `<%subnavigation%>` widget would display navigation to the Sports section's subsections (*e.g.*, "Baseball," "Basketball," "Golf," etc). Likewise, if you're browsing a page in the "Baseball" section, the `<%subnavigation%>` widget would in turn display the Baseball section's subsections (*e.g.*, "Little League," "High School," "College" and "Professional").

You can, however, set the widget to display navigation to the subsections of any section of the site (via the `slug` attribute) or for the top-level parent section of the current section (via the `main` attribute).

Attributes

slug Specifies the section whose subsections should be displayed in the navigation. If no `slug` attribute is specified (and if the `main` attribute is not set), the current section's subsections will be displayed.

```
<%subnavigation slug="sports"%>
```

main If set to a "true" value, the widget will display the subsections of the current main section, the top-level parent section of the page being browsed. For example, if you're browsing a page in the "Sports>Baseball>Little League" subsection, "Sports" is the main section, and the widget will display the Sports subsections.

```
<%subnavigation main="1"%>
```

direction Sets the orientation of the subnavigation to either horizontal or vertical. If no `direction` is specified, the default orientation from the site's HTML preferences is applied.

```
<%subnavigation direction="horizontal"%>
```

```
<%subnavigation direction="vertical"%>
```

Settings

The settings for the `<%subnavigation%>` widget are found in the "Widget: subnavigation" panel of the site's "Navigation" HTML preferences.

Default orientation Sets the default orientation of the navigation to either horizontal or vertical.

Vertical style Sets the style (*e.g.*, "Dropdown menu") that is applied to vertical subnavigation. In practice, selecting a navigation style adds CSS style rules to the site's style sheet. If you prefer to create your own navigation style, select "None: Unstyled list" to remove Big Medium's navigation-specific CSS rules, leaving you with a blank slate to add your own CSS.

Horizontal style Sets the style that is applied to horizontal subnavigation. As noted for the vertical style setting, you can remove the styles completely by selecting "None: Unstyled list."

Subsection depth The number of subsection levels to include in the navigation. The `<%subnavigation%>` widget always includes, at a minimum, all subsections of the current section (nothing is displayed if there are no subsections). You can also choose to include up to three additional levels of subsections.

Styles and structure

The `<%subnavigation%>` widget shares the same HTML and CSS structure as `<%navigation%>`; see the diagram in Figure 10.19. The only difference is that the container `<div>` for the widget has either `bmh_hsubnav` (for horizontal subnavigation) or `bmh_vsubnav` (for vertical) in addition to the `bmh_navigation` class.

Apart from that difference, the same CSS selectors can be used to style both the `<%subnavigation%>` and `<%navigation%>` widgets.

`<%sections%>`

The `<%sections%>` widget is like a [<%links%>](#) widget for subsections. Although it can be used on any page, it's typically put to best use on section templates where you want to display descriptive links to the section's subsections. The `<%sections%>` widget can display all of the same content elements as the link widgets—image, page description, etc.—but includes links only to the subsection pages of the current section.

For example, if your site's "Products" section has subsections for "Gadgets," "Gizmos," and "Gewgaws," the `<%sections%>` widget will display links to the front pages of those subsections on the Products section page. If any of those subsections have their own subsections, those are not displayed—only the immediate level of subsections. If a section has no subsections, the `<%sections%>` widget displays nothing at all.

Settings

You can customize the following `<%sections%>` settings in the "Widget: sections" panel of the site's "Links" HTML preferences:

Link elements	To customize the <code><%sections%></code> link elements to be different than the default elements specified in the "General" panel of the links preference page, check the "Customize for this widget" checkbox and select the elements to include. To revert to the default values, uncheck the customize option.
Link image display	Alignment of images displayed with links in the <code><%sections%></code> widget ("align left," "align right," "above link text" or "do not include image").
Link image size	The image size to use for images displayed with links in the <code><%sections%></code> widget.

Styles and structure

The structure of the `<%sections%>` HTML follows the general link structure described in “Link styles and structure”; the outer `<div>` belongs to the `bmw_sections` class. Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the `<%sections%>` widget:

`div.bmw_sections div.bmw_link` — Individual block of link text

`div.bmw_sections div.bmw_link a.bma_head` — Headline link

`<%search%>`

The `<%search%>` widget displays a simple search form with a single text field and button. Submitting the form takes you to a search results page, which uses the site’s utility template to display results via that template’s `<%content%>` widget. (Specifically, it’s the utility template for the homepage section.)

Search limitations: What’s not covered

Big Medium’s built-in search engine will meet the needs of most sites, but it does have a few limitations.

Searches only Big Medium pages. Any pages that you keep outside of Big Medium or in other applications are not covered.

Does not index documents. The search engine searches only the text that you enter for individual pages. It does not index PDFs, Word files or other documents.

Does not index template text, announcements or tips. Only the various text fields that you enter for individual pages are indexed. Secondary content in templates, server-side includes, announcements and texts are not covered.



But I need search that does that!

If you require a search function that includes any of those three features, you might consider using an external search service. Both Yahoo and Google, for example, offer services to include search results in your pages.

Or, if you have permission to install software on your server, you could also configure your own custom search engine. (If you go that route, be sure to select software that can index UTF-8 Unicode text; [mnoGoSearch](http://www.mnogosearch.org/)⁵ is one such option.)

When pages are indexed

Pages are indexed by Big Medium’s maintenance script, which makes for a slight delay of a few minutes between editing pages and having those changes available via search. If you find that your edits never seem to make their way into the search index, the maintenance script may not be set up properly; see “[Set up the Maintenance Script](#)” in *Appendix A: Installing Big Medium* for instructions.

⁵ <http://www.mnogosearch.org/>

What language are you using?

Big Medium tunes its search index depending on the language in which your site is written. Big Medium looks for this information in the “Language” field in the “Document and Page Header” screen of the site’s HTML preferences.

Settings

The following settings are available in the “Site Search” screen of the site’s HTML preferences.

Search button text	The text to display in the search form’s button.
Title of results page	Headline for search results.
Results caption	A “text template” for the brief description that appears above search results (e.g. “Results 11-20 of 379 for cucumber gimlets ”). Use the following placeholders to represent the various pieces of information in that caption; <code><%end%></code> is a place holder for the number of the last result shown, <code><%total%></code> for <code>**<%query%></code> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <code><%start%></code> : Number of the first result shown• <code><%end%></code>: Number of the last result shown• <code><%total%></code>: The total number of results for the query• <code><%query%></code>: The requested text for the search
“No results” text	The text to display when no results are found.
“Previous” text	The text to use for the link to the previous page of results.
“Next” text	The text to use for the link to the next page of results.

Styles and structure

The widget is a `<form>` element with class `bmw_search` and includes `<input>` and `<button>` elements. These CSS selectors may be used to create custom styles for the `<%search%>` widget.

`form.bmw_search` - The form container

`form.bmw_search input` - The text field

`form.bmw_search button` - The search button

The search results are displayed within a containing `<div>` with class `bmw_search_results`. Each result is in turn displayed within its own `<div>` with class `bmw_link`. Here are some CSS selectors to use to style the search results.

`div.bmw_search_results p` - The search caption

`div.bmw_search div.bmw_link` - The text of an individual search result

`div.bmw_search a` - Search result link

<%tagcloud%>

The <%tagcloud%> widget displays a list of all of the site’s tags in alphabetical order and sized according to each tag’s frequency. The most common tags are largest; relatively rare tags are smallest. The result is an at-a-glance overview of what the site is about.

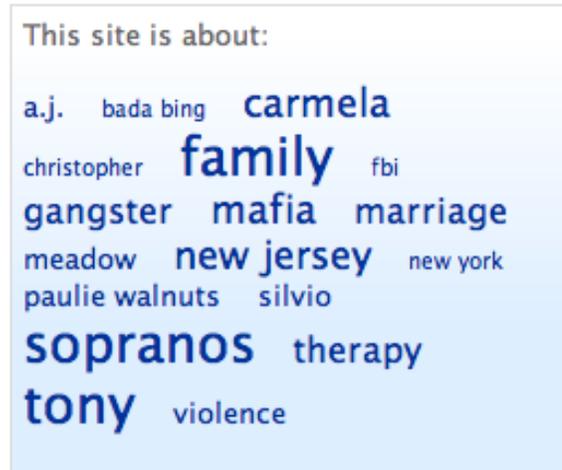


Figure 10.20. A tagcloud for “The Sopranos”

To display the tags for an individual page, see “<%tags%>” in the “Content and Images” section of this chapter.

Styles and structure

The <%tagcloud%> widget is a HTML list with class name `bmw_tagcloud`. Here are some commonly used CSS selectors for creating custom styles for the <%tagcloud%> widget:

`ul.bmw_tagcloud` — The outer container for <%tagcloud%>

`ul.bmw_tagcloud li` - Tag list item

`ul.bmw_tagcloud li a` - Tag link

`a.bmw_tagcloud_xlarge` - Extra-large tag link

`a.bmw_tagcloud_large` - Large tag link

`a.bmw_tagcloud_medium` - Medium tag link

`a.bmw_tagcloud_small` - Small tag link

`a.bmw_tagcloud_xsmall` - Extra-small tag links

<%breadcrumbs%>

The <%breadcrumbs%> widget creates a navigation line for the page. Like a trail of crumbs leading back to the homepage, breadcrumb navigation helps your visitors understand where they are in your site.

For example, if an article titled “It’s All in the Wrist” were located in the “Bowling” subsection of a site’s “Activities” section, the breadcrumbs would display:

[Home](#) > [Activities](#) > [Bowling](#) > It’s All in the Wrist

In our example, the “Home,” “Activities,” and “Bowling” links link respectively to the homepage, the main Activities section page and the Bowling subsection page.

Settings

You can customize the <%breadcrumbs%> display in the “Widget: breadcrumbs” panel of the site’s “Navigation” HTML preferences.

Full breadcrumbs	Check this option to include the headline of the current page in the breadcrumbs. In the bowling example above, enabling the option includes “It’s All in the Wrist.”
Capitalization	Check the “make breadcrumbs all-lowercase” to make the breadcrumb text, um, lowercase.
Breadcrumb separator	Choose the character to separate breadcrumb navigation elements. The default value: “>”

Styles and structure

The <%breadcrumbs%> widget is wrapped in a <div> container (class: `bmw_breadcrumbs`) and consists of a set of links (class: `bma_breadcrumb`).

```
<div class="bmw_breadcrumbs">
  <a href="..." class="bma_breadcrumb">Home</a>
  &gt;
  <a href="..." class="bma_breadcrumb">Activities</a>
  &gt;
  <a href="..." class="bma_breadcrumb">Bowling</a>
  &gt;
  It's All in the Wrist
</div>
```

You can use the following CSS selectors to create your own custom styles for the <%breadcrumbs%> widget:

`div.bmw_breadcrumbs` — Outer container for all breadcrumb links and text

`div.bmw_breadcrumbs a` — Breadcrumb link

<%pulldown%>

The <%pulldown%> widget displays a select/pulldown menu of the subsections of any section of the site. The widget includes the complete tree of subsections, including sub-subsection, sub-sub-subsections, etc.



Figure 10.21. The <%pulldown%> widget

The default is to display all sections below the current section, but you can set the widget to display the subsections of any section of the site (via the `slug` attribute) or for the top-level parent section of the current section (via the `main` attribute).

Attributes

slug Specifies the section whose subsections should be displayed in the menu. If no `slug` attribute is specified (and if the `main` attribute is not set), the current section's subsections will be displayed. To display all sections of the site, use the slug: `@all`

```
<!-- display subsections of the current section -->
<%pulldown%>

<!-- display subsections of products section -->
<%pulldown slug="products"%>

<!-- display all sections of the site -->
<%pulldown slug="@all"%>
```

Example 10.6. The <%pulldown%> widget's `slug` attribute

main If set to a “true” value, the widget will display the subsections of the current main section, the top-level parent section of the page being browsed. For example, if you're browsing a page in the “Sports>Baseball>Little League” subsection, “Sports” is the main section, and the widget will display the Sports subsections.

```
<%pulldown main="1"%>
```

Settings

To edit the text that is displayed in the pulldown when no section is selected (default is “Jump to:”), use the setting in the “Widget: pulldown” panel of the site’s “Navigation” HTML preferences.

Styles and structure

The `<%pulldown%>` widget is a `<form>` element (class: `bmw_pulldown`) that contains a `<select>` menu. You can style the select menu with this CSS selector: `form.bmw_pulldown select`

`<%sectionlink%>`

The `<%sectionlink%>` widget displays a link to the front page of a section, using the section’s name as the link text. By default, the section is the current section, but you can specify another section in the slug attribute.

Attributes

The `slug` attribute specifies the slug name of the section to which you want to link. If no section is specified, the widget displays a link to the current section.

```
<%sectionlink slug="news"%>
```

HTML output

```
<a href="..." class="bmw_sectionlink">Section name</a>
```

`<%parentlink%>`

The `<%parentlink%>` widget displays a link to the current section’s immediate parent section.

For example, if you’re browsing a page in the “Sports>Baseball>Little League” subsection, the `<%parentlink%>` widget displays a link to the Baseball section, the immediate parent of the Little League section. Likewise, in the Baseball section, `<%parentlink%>` displays a link to Sports.

On sections with no parent section (the homepage and main sections), `<%parentlink%>` displays nothing at all.

HTML output

```
<a href="..." class="bmw_parentlink">Section name</a>
```

`<%mainsectionlink%>`

The `<%mainsectionlink%>` widget displays a link to the top-level section of the current section.

To return to our “Sports>Baseball>Little League” subsection example, the `<%mainsectionlink%>` widget would display a link to the Sports section if you were browsing any page in the Little League, Baseball or Sports sections.

The `<%mainsectionlink%>` widget displays nothing at all on the homepage.

HTML output

```
<a href="..." class="bmw_mainsectionlink">Section name</a>
```

Homepage and Site Name

The homepage and site name widgets display links to the homepage and/or the name of the site.

<%sitename%>

The <%sitename%> widget displays the name of the site with no additional HTML. (The name of the site can be changed in the [“Site Properties”](#) screen in the “Settings” menu.)

<%sitename%>

The <%sitename%> widget displays the name of the site, linked to the homepage.

HTML output

```
<a href="..." class="bmw_sitename%>Site name</a>
```

<%homelink%>

The <%homelink%> widget displays a link to the homepage, with the name of the homepage section as the link text (e.g., “Home” or “Main”). This homepage section name is set in the “Section Structure” screen of the “Layout” menu.

HTML output

```
<a href="..." class="bmw_homelink">Home</a>
```

<%sitelogo%>

For now, the <%sitelogo%> widget displays the site’s name in a <h1> heading tag, linked to the homepage. (An additional option is planned to allow you to upload a logo image to be displayed instead of the text name.)

HTML output

```
<h1 class="bmw_sitelogo">  
  <a href="...">Site name</a>  
</h1>
```

Tips and Announcements

These widgets display the site’s tip and announcement micro-content.

<%tips%>

The <%tips%> widget displays the tips, if any, assigned to the specified section. You can choose to display one random selection from the pool of available tips, or a static list of the top tips.

At the bottom of the displayed tips, a text link points to a *summary page* containing the complete listing of all tips for the section. (This archive page is generated using the utility template, and the tip text is placed via the template’s <%content%> widget).

If the section has no tips, the widget displays nothing at all.

Attributes

The `slug` attribute specifies the slug name of the section for which tips should be displayed (including tips assigned to any subsections). If no `slug` attribute is specified, tips assigned to the current section are shown. To display tips assigned to all sections of the site, use the slug: `@all`

```
<!-- display tips assigned to current section -->
<%tips%>

<!-- display tips assigned to the news section -->
<%tips slug="news"%>

<!-- display all of the site's tips, from all sections -->
<%tips slug="@all"%>
```

Example 10.7. The <%tips%> widget

Settings

Settings for the <%tips%> widget are located in the “Widget: tips” panel of the site’s “Tips and Announcements” HTML preferences (except for the “tip image size” setting, located in the site’s “Images” HTML preferences).

Tip rotation	You can display tips in one of two modes: A single “rotating” tip selected at random from the pool of available tips, or a static listing of a fixed number of tips from the top of the list.
Sort order	This setting determines the sort order for tips on the tip summary page and, when displaying a static listing of tips, the order of tips displayed in the <%tips%> widget itself. Select the primary sort criterion in the first dropdown menu and, in case of matching values, select second and third criteria in the fields below.

Number to display	When displaying a static listing of tips, this setting determines how many tips are shown. (If you're displaying a random tip, only one tip is shown no matter what you select here.)
Title of summary page	The text to use as the headline of the tip summary page, which lists all tips assigned to the section.
"All tips" link text	The text of the link to the tip summary page (you can also remove the link entirely by clearing the text in this field).
Tip image size	This option in the "General" panel of the site's "Images" HTML preferences sets the size of images to use in the <code><%tips%></code> widget.

In addition, the `<%tips%>` widget inherits and applies the "Detail Page" HTML preferences for displaying media elements. Consult the [<%content%> reference entry](#) for details about these settings:

- Media alignment
- Enlarged image size
- "Enlarge image" text



Section properties and `<%tips%>`

As with many other widgets, you can customize the appearance of the `<%tips%>` widget for a specific section by editing the section properties for that section (see "[Section Properties: Section-specific preferences](#)" in *Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories*).

Note, however, that these section-property settings apply to the section feeding the widget, not necessarily where the widget is actually displayed. For example, say that you have a "News" section with the slug name "news" and you're displaying the section's tips on the homepage like so:

```
<%tips slug="news"%>
```

Changing the section properties for the homepage will have no effect in this example. Instead, you need to change the section properties for the "News" section.

Styles and structure

The `<%tips%>` widget is contained in a `<div>` tag (class: `bmw_tips`) which in turn contains a `<div>` tag (class: `bmw_tips_tip`) for each individual tip. These individual tip divs contain a `<h3>` heading and the tip content, contained in a `<div>` tag with class `bmw_tipContent`. As with body text in the [<%content%>](#) widget, any images and documents for the tip are woven into the tip text.

Here are some CSS selectors that you can use to create custom styles for the `<%tips%>` widget:

- `div.bmw_tips` — Outer container for all of the tips
- `div.bmw_tips_tip` — Container for an individual tip
- `h3.bmw_tips` — Tip headline
- `div.bmw_tipContent` — Tip text
- `a.bma_tips` — The “All tips” link to the summary tip page

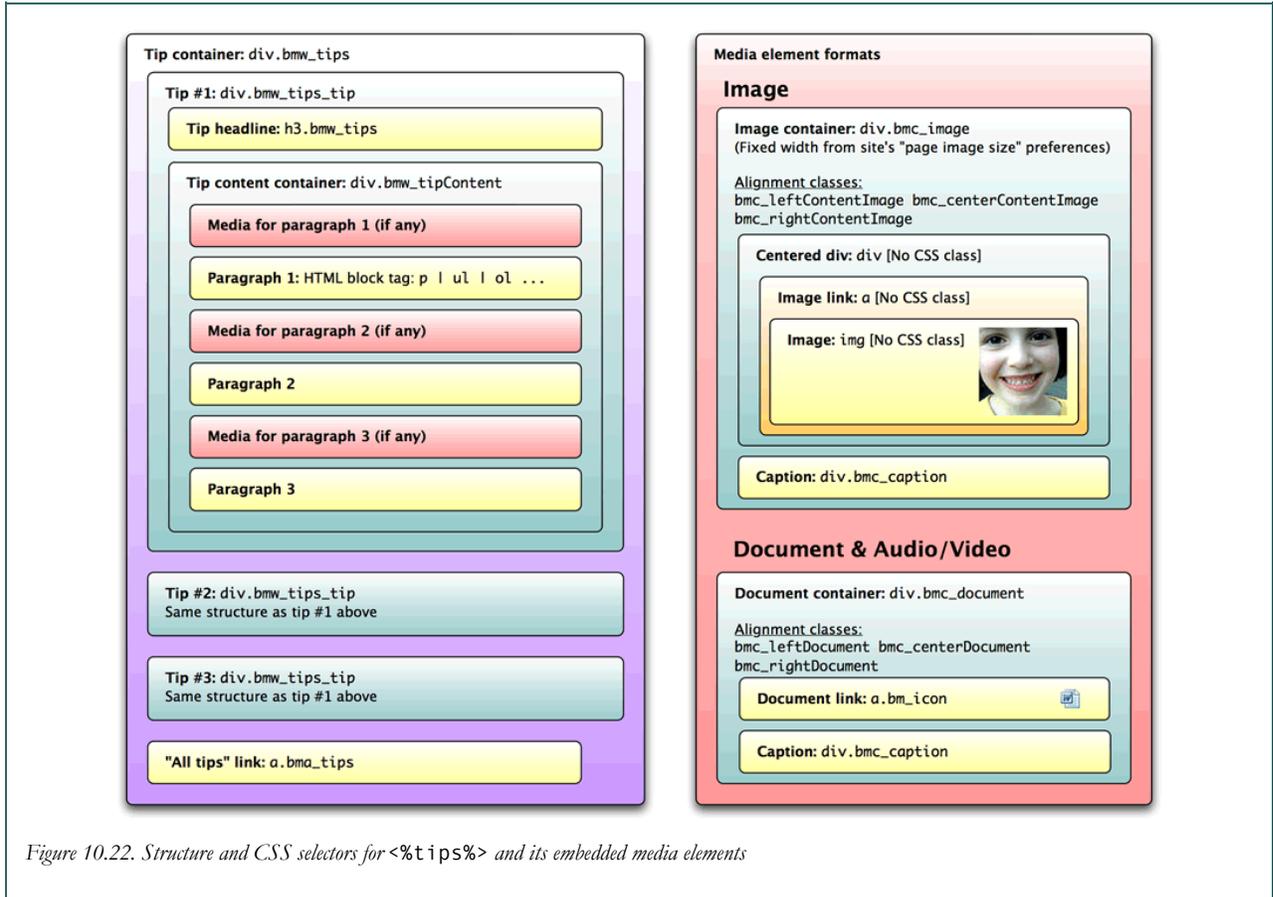


Figure 10.22. Structure and CSS selectors for `<tips%>` and its embedded media elements

`<%announcements%>`

The `<%announcements%>` widget displays all announcements, if any, assigned to the specified section (via the `slug` attribute) or to the current section. If the section has no announcements, the widget displays nothing at all.

Attributes

The `slug` attribute specifies the slug name of the section for which announcements should be displayed (including announcements assigned to any subsections). If no `slug` attribute is specified, announcements assigned to the current section are shown. To display announcements assigned to all sections of the site, use the slug: `@all`

```
<!-- display announcements assigned to current section -->
<%announcements%>

<!-- display announcements assigned to the news section -->
<%announcements slug="news"%>

<!-- display all of the site's announcements -->
<%announcements slug="@all"%>
```

Example 10.8. The <%announcements%> widget

Settings

The sort order setting for items displayed in the <%announcements%> widget is located in the “Widget: announcements” panel of the site’s “Tips and Announcements” HTML preferences. Select the primary sort criterion in the first dropdown menu and, in case of matching values, select second and third criteria in the menus below.

The “announcement image size” setting in the site’s “Images” HTML preferences screen lets you select the size of images displayed by the <%announcements%> widget.

Also, consult the [<%content%> reference entry](#) for details about these settings:

- Media alignment
- Enlarged image size
- "Enlarge image" text



Section properties and <%announcements%>

As with many other widgets, you can customize the appearance of the <%announcements%> widget for a specific section by editing the section properties for that section (see [“Section Properties: Section-specific preferences”](#) in *Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories*).

Note, however, that these section-property settings apply to the section feeding the widget, not necessarily where the widget is actually displayed. For example, say that you have a “News” section with the slug name “news” and you’re displaying the section’s announcements on the homepage like so:

```
<%announcements slug="news"%>
```

Changing the section properties for the homepage will have no effect in this example. Instead, you need to change the section properties for the “News” section.

Styles and structure

The `<%announcements%>` widget is contained in a `<div>` tag (class: `bmw_announcements`) which in turn contains a `<div>` tag (class: `bmw_announce`) for each individual announcement. These individual announcement divs contain a `<h3>` heading and the announcement content, contained in a `<div>` tag with class `bmw_annContent`. As with body text in the `<%content%>` widget, any images and documents for the announcement are woven into the tip text.

Here are some CSS selectors that you can use to create custom styles for the `<%announcements%>` widget:

`div.bmw_announcements` — Outer container for all of the announcements

`div.bmw_announce` — Container for an individual announcement

`h3.bmw_announce` — Announcement headline

`div.bmw_annContent` — Announcement text

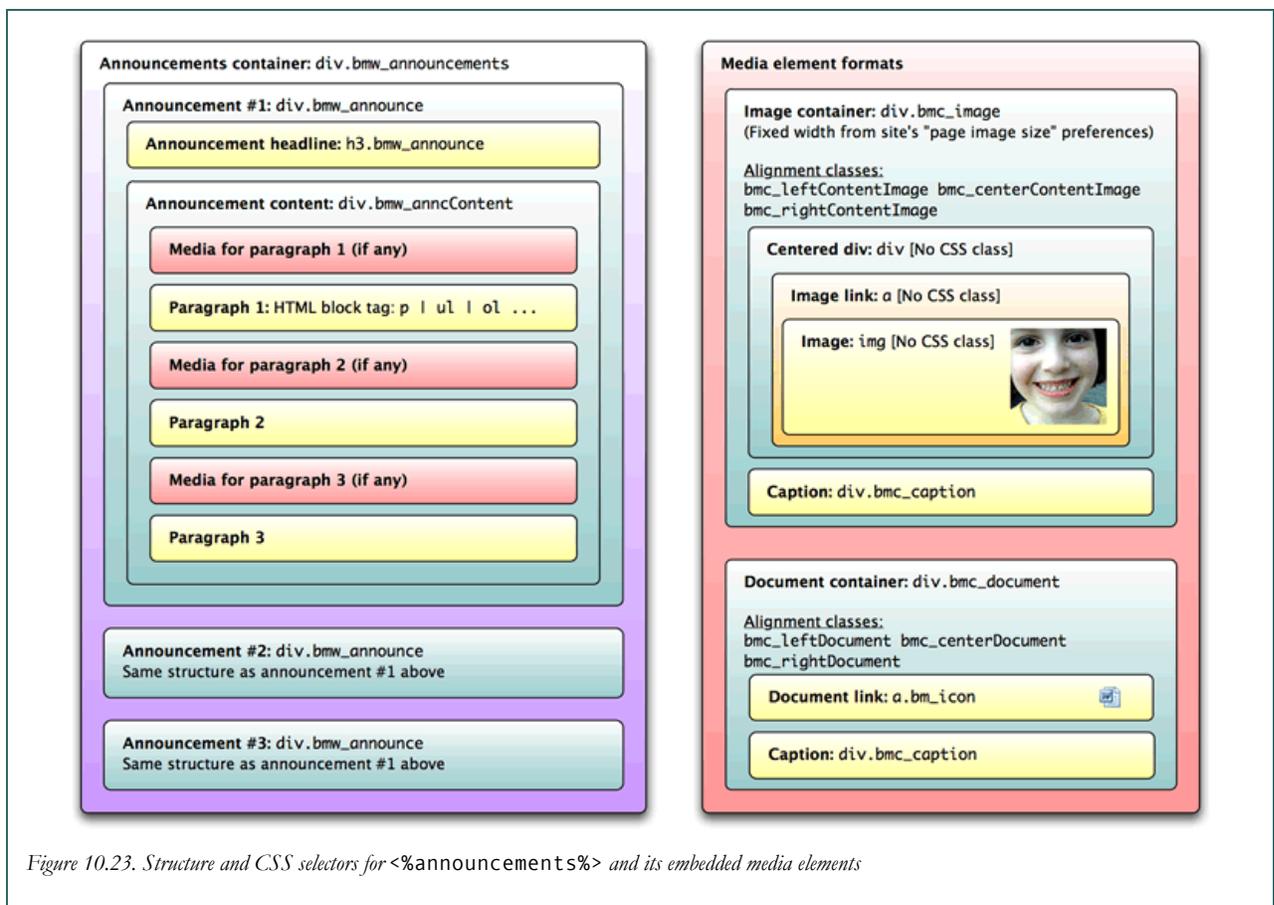


Figure 10.23. Structure and CSS selectors for `<%announcements%>` and its embedded media elements

News Feeds

The news-feed widgets display links and descriptive text about your site's *news feeds*.



What's a news feed?

Big Medium's news feeds distribute your web content beyond your site and even beyond the browser, using a format called Really Simple Syndication (RSS).

By subscribing to your news feed, your site's visitors can browse your headlines and announcements with a "feed reader" (or "news aggregator"). A feed reader can take the form of an application that runs on your computer, or as a website where you have a personal feed-reading account. (The Safari, Firefox and Internet Explorer 7 browsers all have built-in feed readers by way of the feature called "live bookmarking.") A kind of hybrid between web browser and e-mail client, a feed reader allows you to subscribe to feeds from your favorite sites, automatically fetching the latest headlines for easy browsing.

For your subscribers, RSS feeds offer a time-saving and convenient way to defeat information overload and keep up with a wide range of content. By subscribing to news feeds that specifically meet their interests, users essentially create their own custom-built newspaper or magazine. Scanning even hundreds of pages per day from all over the web suddenly becomes an easy task.

Despite the name, "news feeds" are not just for news sites. Although RSS is certainly well suited for distributing news headlines and links, non-news sites can put RSS feeds to work in a variety of other ways. From marketing new products to distributing press releases to announcing event dates and times, RSS feeds provide a simple way to alert your audience to new content on your website.

Enabling news feeds

News feeds are enabled on a per-site basis and are turned on by default. You can turn news feeds on or off from the "RSS Preferences" screen in the "Settings" menu.

In addition, individual sections can have "standalone" news feeds, that contain links only to pages assigned to that section and its subsections, if any. By default, main sections have standalone news feeds and subsections do not. You can turn section-specific news feeds on or off by editing the section properties for the section. For more about section properties, see ["Section Properties: Section-specific preferences"](#) in [Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories](#).

<%feeds%>

The <%feeds%> widget displays a link to the site's *news feeds page* generated by the news feed template, which displays links to all of your site's news feeds. The link displays the  news feed icon and link text, unless RSS feeds are disabled for your site (in which case, the widget displays nothing at all).

Settings

The following settings are found in the “RSS Preferences” screen in the “Settings” menu.

News feed link text	The text of the link; the default value is: “News feeds”
Enable RSS feeds	Check this option to generate news feeds for the site

HTML output

```
<div class="bma_feeds">  
  <a href="..." class="bma_feed">News feeds</a>  
</div>
```

<%fullfeedlink%>

The <%fullfeedlink%> widget displays a link to the full, sitewide feed for your site. Provided the RSS feeds are enabled, widget displays the  news feed icon and link text.

Settings

The following settings are found in the “RSS Preferences” screen in the “Settings” menu.

Name of sitewide feed	The text of the link; the default value is: “Full Feed”
Enable RSS feeds	Check this option to generate news feeds for the site

HTML output

```
<div class="bma_fullfeedlink">  
  <a href="..." class="bma_feed">Full Feed</a>  
</div>
```

<%podcastlink%>

The <%podcastlink%> widget displays a link to the podcast feed for your site. Provided the RSS feeds are enabled, widget displays the  news feed icon and link text.



What’s a podcast?

A *podcast* is your own radio or TV show distributed online as a news feed. Like “regular” news feeds, podcasts allow your visitors to subscribe to your site’s content, but with a twist: The feed sends audio or video files so that your visitors can automatically load your show into their computer, iPod or MP3 player. Every time you add a new podcast page to your site (by clicking “New Podcast” in the “New Page” menu), Big Medium adds a new “episode” to the site’s podcast feed.

Settings

The following settings are found in the “RSS Preferences” screen in the “Settings” menu.

Name of podcast feed	The text of the link; the default value is: “Podcast”
Include podcast feed	If not enabled, <code><%podcastlink%></code> displays nothing at all
Enable RSS feeds	If not enabled, no feeds—including podcasts—are generated for your site

HTML output

```
<div class="bmw_podcastlink">
  <a href="..." class="bma_feed">Podcast</a>
</div>
```

`<%sectionfeeds%>`

The `<%sectionfeeds%>` widget displays a list of links to all section-specific feeds for your site. Each link displays the  news feed icon and the section name. Section-specific feeds can be enabled/disabled in each section’s “Section Properties” screen, in the “Settings” menu.

Settings

The following settings are found in the “RSS Preferences” screen in the “Settings” menu.

Section-specific feeds heading	The text of the heading that appears above the section feeds (delete the text to remove the heading altogether).
Enable RSS feeds	If not enabled, no feeds are generated for your site

HTML output

```
<div class="bmw_sectionfeeds">
  <h3>Section-Specific Feeds</h3>
  <ul>
    <li>
      <a href="..." class="bma_head">Puppies</a>
    </li>
    <li>
      <a href="..." class="bma_head">Kittens</a>
    </li>
    <li>
      <a href="..." class="bma_head">Bunnies</a>
    </li>
  </ul>
</div>
```

Example 10.9. `<%sectionfeeds%>` HTML output

<%feedtitle%>

The <%feedtitle%> widget generates the headline for the news feeds page.

Settings

The title text of can be set in the “News feed page title” field in the “RSS Preferences” screen, available from the “Settings” menu. The default text is “RSS News Feeds.”

HTML output

```
<h2 class="bmw_headline">RSS News Feeds</h2>
```

<%feedintro%>

The <%feedintro%> widget generates introductory text for the news feeds page.

Settings

The following setting is found in the “RSS Preferences” screen in the “Settings” menu.

News feed intro text, The text to display.

HTML output

```
<div class="bmw_feedintro">
  <p>Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is a format for sharing
    headlines and other online content, allowing you to browse
    content from many sites at once with a news reader.
    To subscribe to this site's news feeds, you need a
    news-reader program on your computer or an account at one
    of the many online news readers on the web.
  </p>
</div>
```

Example 10.10. <%feedintro%> HTML output

News Gadgets

A web *gadget* (sometimes called a widget or badge) is a snippet of code that you offer site visitors to allow them to display your latest links on their own sites. A news gadget is similar to a news feed; it's another way to distribute automatically updated content beyond the boundaries of your site. Unlike a news feed, which can be viewed only within a specialized news reader, gadgets can be embedded on any website, allowing your fans to display your content on their blogs or sites.

Enabling news gadgets

News gadgets are enabled on a per-site basis and are turned on by default. You can turn news gadgets on or off from the “News Gadget Preferences” screen in the “Settings” menu.

In addition, individual sections can have their own section-specific news gadget containing links only to pages assigned to that section. By default, main sections have news gadgets and subsections do not. You can turn section-specific gadgets on or off by editing the section properties for the section. For more about section properties, see [“Section Properties: Section-specific preferences”](#) in *Chapter 7: Sections and Content Categories*.

<%newsgadget%>

The <%newsgadget%> widget displays a link to your site’s gadget-builder page, where your visitors fill out a simple form to generate the gadget code for their site.

Settings

The following settings are found in the “News Gadget Preferences” screen in the “Settings” menu.

Enable news gadgets	Allows visitors to use your site’s news gadgets. If not enabled, the <%newsgadget%> widget will not be displayed, and the gadget-builder page will not be generated.
Link text	The text of the <%newsgadget%> link.

HTML output

```
<div class="bmw_newsgadget">
  <a>Put our news gadget on your website</a>
</div>
```

Example 10.11. <%newsgadget%> HTML output

The gadget-builder page

If news gadgets are enabled, Big Medium will build a gadget-builder page for you, offering a brief description of news gadgets and a simple form to generate gadget code to display your links in their own site. The form lets your visitors control the number and format of links to be displayed and offers a preview of what the gadget will look like.

The gadget builder is displayed with your site’s utility template. The page’s contents are displayed with the <%headline%>, <%title%> and <%content%> widgets in that template.

You can link to the gadget-builder page via the <%newsgadget%> widget, but its location is always a file named `bm~gadget.shtml` in your Big Medium homepage directory. For example:

`http://www.example.com/bm~gadget.shtml`

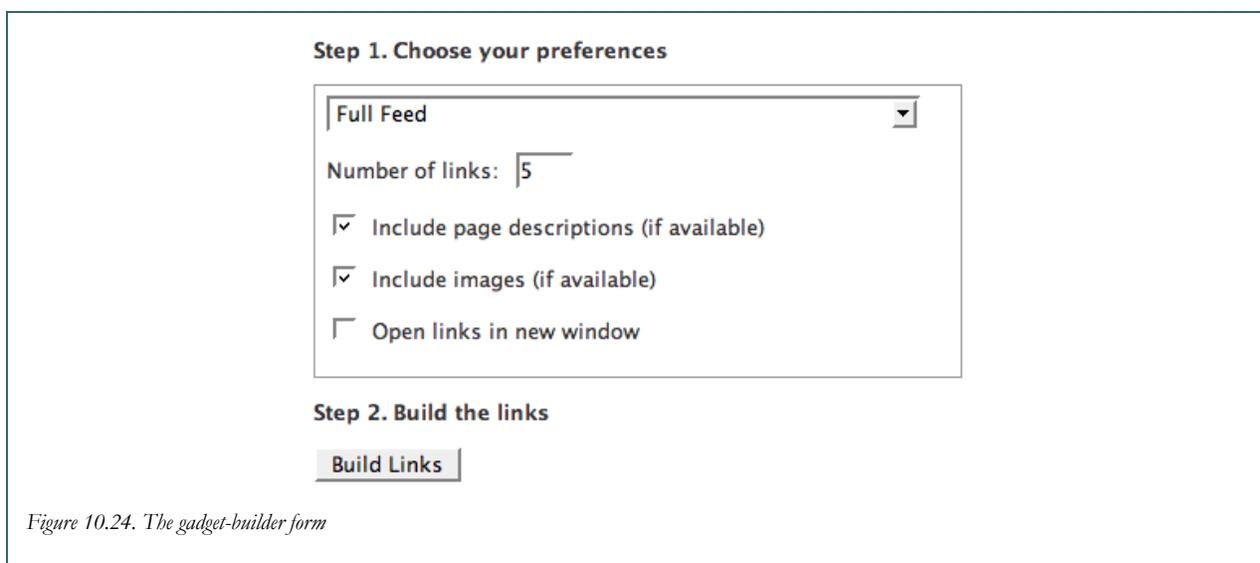


Figure 10.24. The gadget-builder form

Settings

The following settings are found in the "News Gadget Preferences" screen in the "Settings" menu.

Enable news gadgets	If not enabled, Big Medium will not create the gadget-builder page.
Max number of links	The maximum number of links to display in news gadgets.
Sort order	The order of links in the gadget display.
Enable images	Allows link images to be included in the gadget display.
Gadget builder heading	Headline of the gadget builder page (displayed by the <code><%title%></code> and <code><%headline%></code> widgets of the utility template).
Gadget builder intro	Intro text displayed above the gadget-builder form.
Step headings	The headings for steps 1-4 of the gadget-builder form.
Step 4 subhead	Explanatory caption for what to do with the gadget code.
Number form label	The "number of links" field label.
Description form label	The "include description" field label.
Image form label	The "include images" field label.
New window form label	The "open links in new window" field label.
"Build links" button	Text for the "build links" button.

Styles and structure

The gadget-generator text and form are contained by a `<div>` tag (class: `bmw_gadgetbuilder`). You can create your own custom styles for the form using these CSS selectors:

- div.bmw_gadgetbuilder — The outer container
- div.bmw_gadgetbuilder h3 — The step headings
- form.bmf_form label — Field labels
- form.bmf_form select — The feed selection menu
- form.bmf_form input.bmf_auto — Checkbox fields
- div.bmw_gadgetbuilder button — The "build links" button

E-mail Page

The `<%emailform%>` widget is intended for use in the e-mail page template, which displays a form allowing your site visitors to email to friends a link and page description for any page of your site. Links to this page are displayed by the `<%emailpage%>` widget and, when author bylines are configured to link to the e-mail form, by the `<%authorlink%>` and `<%byline%>` widgets. All of these widgets are described in this chapter's "Content and Images" section.

`<%emailform%>`

This widget displays a form that allows visitors to e-mail a link to any page of your site.

Settings

The following settings for `<%emailform%>` are found in the site's "E-mail Text" HTML preferences.

E-mail page intro text	The text displayed immediately above the e-mail form that is displayed when a visitor clicks a page's "E-mail" link.
E-mail author intro text	The text displayed immediately above the e-mail form displayed when a visitor clicks an author's byline link.
"From" field text	The label for the sender's e-mail address in the e-mail form
"To" field text	The label for the recipient's e-mail address in the e-mail form
"Send copy" field text	The label for the "send me a copy" checkbox in the e-mail form
"Message" field text	The label for the sender's comments in the e-mail form
Privacy notice	The privacy disclaimer in the e-mail form
Confirmation text	The message displayed after the message has been sent
"Return to page" text	The text of the link that takes the visitor back to the original page after sending the message

The same preference screen also offers options for customizing the text of the e-mail that is sent:

E-mail subject	The subject line of messages sent after clicking a page's "E-mail" link
----------------	---

E-mail intro	The introductory text of messages sent after clicking a page's "E-mail" link
Sender's message caption	The caption that introduces the sender's message in the e-mail
Author subject	The subject line of messages sent after clicking an author's byline link
Author intro	The introductory text of messages sent after clicking an author's byline link

In addition, the e-mail form includes a "challenge question" to help prevent automated spam submissions to the e-mailer. You can change the question and required response in the "Spam" screen of the site's HTML preferences. When selecting your question, be sure to pick one that has only one obvious answer.

Styles and structure

The `<%emailform%>` widget consists of a `<form>` within a `<div>` tag (class: `bmw_emailform`). Field labels are wrapped in `<label>` tags, and the fields themselves are `<input>` and `<textarea>` tags.

You can create your own custom styles for the form using these CSS selectors:

- `div.bmw_emailform` — The form and outer container
- `form.bmf_form label` — Field labels
- `form.bmf_form input` — Text fields
- `form.bmf_form input.bmf_auto` — "Send copy" checkbox field
- `form.bmf_form textarea` — The comments field

Page Footer

These widgets are commonly placed at the bottom of pages as the site's fine print.

`<%footer%>`

The `<%footer%>` widget displays the site's footer text as entered in the "Page Footer" HTML preferences. The footer is commonly used to display legal info and links to key pages, like the site's contact page or "about us" page.

Styles and structure

The `<%footer%>` widget displays the footer text exactly as entered in the "Page Footer" preferences, wrapped in a `<div>` tag (class: `bmw_footer`). The `div.bmw_footer` selector can be used to add your own custom styles to the footer text.

<%bigmedium%>

The <%bigmedium%> widget displays a Big Medium icon linking to the [Global Moxie website](http://globalmoxie.com/)⁶. You're not obliged to include this widget on your pages—you've already done your part by paying for the software—but if you like me and my software, please consider adding this flag to the footer of your pages. And hey, thanks!

Styles and structure

The <%bigmedium%> widget is a simple text link, which Big Medium styles to look like an icon image. You can add your own custom styles to the <%bigmedium%> widget by using the `a.bmw_bigmedium` selector. Example 10.12 shows the styles to add to your site's theme style sheet to align the icon left, right or center.

```
/* align left */
a.bmw_bigmedium {
    margin-left: 0;
    margin-right: auto;
}

/* align center */
a.bmw_bigmedium {
    margin: 0 auto;
}

/* align right */
a.bmw_bigmedium {
    margin-right: 0;
    margin-left: auto;
}
```

Example 10.12. Aligning the <%bigmedium%> widget

Environment Values

This category of widgets allow you to insert the current date, as well as a variety of values based on the page's location in the site: section names, directory URLs, slug names and virtual directory paths. Many of these are particularly useful if you want to include images, links or server-side-includes whose filenames change based on the current section or page.

For example, say that you want to include an icon in your pages that changes based on the current section of the site. To do this, you could create an icon image for each section and name it based on the section's slug name (`news.gif`, `business.gif`, `sports.gif`, etc.). After uploading these images to your directory located at, say, `http://www.example.com/images`, you would update your templates to include image tags like so:

⁶ <http://globalmoxie.com/>

```

```

Because the `<%sectionslug%` tag inserts the slug name of the current section, the image tag would automatically display the image corresponding to that section.

Creative use of these widgets lets you add section- and page-specific design elements with just a single set of templates, often eliminating the need to create custom section templates.

`<%today%`

The `<%today%` widget displays the current date (that is, the date in local server time at the moment the visitor loads the page). The date format is the same as that set in the “Site Properties” screen of the “Settings” menu.

HTML output

```
<span class="bmw_today">Nov 3, 2006</span>
```

`<%sitemap%`

The `<%sitemap%` widget adds a link to a special sitemap file for search engines. This link is invisible to the human eyes but will be picked up by search engine spiders. The sitemap file provides links to every page of the site, using the [sitemap XML format](#)⁷ supported by all major search engines.



`<%sitemap%` doesn't generate a link. What gives?

Big Medium will not build sitemaps for a site if the site's page directory URL is not the same or “below” the site's homepage directory URL, or if the two directory URLs use different domains.

For example, if a page's homepage directory is `http://www.example.com/site`, then the site's page directory must be the same or inside that directory in order for Big Medium to build the sitemap. For example, any of these page directory URLs would work:

```
http://www.example.com/site
```

```
http://www.example.com/site/bm
```

```
http://www.example.com/site/path/to/pages
```

However, the following would not work because they are not within the `http://www.example.com/site` homepage directory:

```
http://www.example.com/bm (not inside site directory)
```

```
http://example.com/site (domain does not match)
```

What's so important about the page directory URL? Search engines require that sitemaps link only to pages that are in the same directory the sitemap file itself. Big Medium builds its

⁷ <http://www.sitemaps.org/>

sitemaps in the homepage directory; if the page directory is not within the “scope” of the homepage directory, then there are no pages that Big Medium can include in the sitemap. In that case, Big Medium will not bother building a sitemap.

How can I fix this? Accounts with administrator privileges can update the page directory URL. Go to “Settings>Site URLs & Directories,” and set the page directory so that its URL is located within the homepage directory.

HTML output

```
<a href="url" class="bma_sitemap" rel="sitemap">sitemap xml</a>
```

<%url%>

The <%url%> widget inserts the URL of the current page, with no additional HTML.

<%pageslug%>

The <%pageslug%> widget inserts the slug name of the current page, with no additional HTML. On the homepage and section pages, which have no page slug, <%pageslug%> inserts the word: `index`

<%dirurl%>

The <%dirurl%> widget inserts the URL to the directory where the current page is located, with no trailing slash and no additional HTML. In other words, the widget inserts the URL of the page’s section directory.

For example, say that a site’s page directory is located at `http://www.example.com/bm`, and you’re browsing a page in the “Gizmos” subsection of the “Products” section. The <%dirurl%> widget would insert:

```
http://www.example.com/bm/products/gizmos
```

<%dirpath%>

The <%dirpath%> widget inserts the *virtual path* to the directory where the current page is located, with no trailing slash and no additional HTML. The virtual path is the directory path from the domain’s web root directory, a notation that is commonly used in server-side-include tags (SSIs).

Using the “Products>Gizmos” example we just used for <%dirurl%>, the <%dirpath%> widget would insert:

```
/bm/products/gizmos
```

<%sectionname%>

The <%sectionname%> widget inserts the name of the current section, with no additional HTML.

<%sectionslug%>

The <%sectionslug%> widget inserts the slug name of the current section, with no additional HTML. For the homepage and other top-level pages with no section slug, the widget inserts: `__HOME`

<%sectionurl%>

The <%sectionurl%> widget inserts the URL for the front page of the current section, with no additional HTML. (See also the [<%sectionlink%>](#) entry in the “Section Navigation, Search and Tags” section).

<%parentpath%>

The <%parentpath%> widget inserts the *virtual path* to the directory of the current section’s parent section, with no trailing slash and no additional HTML.

For example, say that a site’s page directory is located at `http://www.example.com/bm`, and you’re browsing a page in the “Sports>Baseball>Little League” subsection, the <%parentpath%> widget inserts the path to the Baseball section (the parent section of Little League):

```
/bm/sports/baseball
```

Likewise, in the Baseball section, <%parentpath%> inserts the path to the sports directory:

```
/bm/sports
```

<%parentpath%> inserts nothing on the homepage or top-level sections.

<%parentname%>

The <%parentname%> widget inserts the name of the current section’s parent section, with no additional HTML. The widget inserts nothing on the homepage or top-level pages.

<%parentslug%>

The <%parentslug%> widget inserts the slug name of the current section’s parent section, with no additional HTML. The widget inserts nothing on the homepage or top-level pages.

<%parenturl%>

The <%parenturl%> widget inserts the URL for the front page of the current section’s parent section, with no additional HTML. The widget inserts nothing on the homepage or top-level sections. (See also the [<%parentlink%>](#) entry in the “Section Navigation, Search and Tags” section).

<%mainsectionpath%>

The <%mainsectionpath%> widget inserts the *virtual path* to the directory of the top-level section to which the current section belongs. The path has no trailing slash or additional HTML.

If you’re browsing the “Sports>Baseball>Little League” section of the site, the main section for the Little League section is Sports. Ditto for the Baseball section and the Sports section itself. If the site’s page directory is located at `http://www.example.com/bm`, then the <%mainsectionpath%> widget for

pages in any of these sections inserts the path to the Sports section:

```
/bm/sports
```

`<%mainsectionpath%>` inserts nothing on the homepage.

`<%mainsectionname%>`

The `<%mainsectionname%>` widget inserts the name of the top-level section to which the current section belongs. The widget inserts nothing on the homepage.

`<%mainsectionslug%>`

The `<%mainsectionslug%>` widget inserts the slug name of the top-level section to which the current section belongs, with no additional HTML. The widget inserts nothing on the homepage.

`<%mainsectionurl%>`

The `<%mainsectionurl%>` widget inserts the URL for the front page of the top-level section to which the current page belongs, with no additional HTML. The widget inserts nothing on the homepage. (See also the [<%mainsectionlink%>](#) entry in the “Section Navigation, Search and Tags” section.)

`<%homedirurl%>`

The `<%homedirurl%>` widget inserts the URL for the site’s homepage directory, with no trailing slash or additional HTML.

`<%homedirpath%>`

The `<%homedirpath%>` widget inserts the virtual path for site’s homepage directory, with no trailing slashes or additional HTML. The virtual path is the path from the domain’s web root directory.

`<%pagedirurl%>`

The `<%pagedirurl%>` widget inserts the URL for the site’s page directory, with no trailing slash or additional HTML.

`<%pagedirpath%>`

The `<%pagedirpath%>` widget inserts the virtual path for site’s page directory, with no trailing slash or additional HTML. The virtual path is the path from the domain’s web root directory.

`<%admindirurl%>`

The `<%admindirurl%>` widget inserts the URL for the site’s `bmadmin` directory, with no trailing slash or additional HTML.

```
http://www.example.com/bmadmin
```

Chapter

11

Styles

A site's *styles* shape the way that its pages are displayed, in ways that range from simple color and font settings to elaborate layout techniques. Under the hood, these styles are controlled by a language called *cascading style sheets*, or CSS, which works hand-in-hand with HTML to create the overall look of the site. It's kind of like a coloring book: HTML provides the structure—the lines—and CSS enhances the picture with design flourish—the color.

Big Medium creates CSS style sheets to support your site's design. If you're a designer who knows CSS, you can provide your own custom CSS style rules; Big Medium fully supports CSS-based designs and layouts. But if you're *not* a designer and all of this CSS and HTML is just so much alphabet soup, Big Medium provides a style editor with a friendly interface to let you edit your styles without any stylesheet know-how.

Novices can use the style editor to make color, font and layout changes to more than 50 Big Medium page elements; CSS ninjas meanwhile can stretch their legs by coding their own CSS style rules directly. We'll start with the ninjas; mere mortals, feel free to skip ahead to the "The Style Editor" section.

The Theme Style Sheet

The *theme style sheet* is Big Medium's main style sheet for the site. When you apply a theme to a site from the theme library, Big Medium clears out any existing styles in the theme style sheet and replaces them with the new theme's CSS styles. You can do the same at any time, editing or replacing the theme style sheet with your own custom CSS.

Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can edit the theme style sheet by going to "Edit Theme Style Sheet" in the "Layout" menu. Big Medium presents a big text field where you can make your changes. Clicking "Save" applies your changes immediately to the live site. The theme styles are included automatically with every page of the site.

If you're creating your own custom design from scratch, you'll probably want to clear the theme style sheet to give yourself a clean slate. You can do this by using the "Remove Theme" option in the "Layout" menu or by editing the theme style sheet as just described and deleting the styles in the edit screen.

Using external style sheets

If you prefer not to edit your CSS through the browser interface, you can also add your own external style sheets to the site. This CSS style sheet will supplement (and take precedence over) any styles in the theme style sheet and the style editor.

To add a link to your external style sheet:

1. Go to “Settings > HTML Preferences”
2. Go to the preferences for “Document and Page Header.”
3. In the panel marked “Widget: htmlhead,” go to the “Additional HTML to include in header” field and add a `<link>` tag for your style sheet. For example:

```
<link href="http://example.com/styles.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" />
```

Big Medium’s navigation styles

By default, Big Medium inserts its own CSS into the theme style sheet to make the `<%navigation%>` and `<%subnavigation%>` widgets generate dropdown menus. If you prefer to use your own styles for the navigation, you can remove these styles in the “Widget: navigation” and “Widget: subnavigation” panels of the site’s “Navigation” HTML preferences. For details, see the entries for [<%navigation%>](#) and [<%subnavigation%>](#) in *Chapter 10: Widgets*.

The Style Editor

Big Medium’s style editor offers a WYSIWYG (“what you see is what you get”) interface for editing your site’s styles. Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can go there by clicking “Styles” in the control panel’s main menu.

The style editor lets you apply colors, change fonts, place background images, and add borders or spacing to a variety of page elements. You can use it to customize the finer points of a theme design, since style-editor settings take precedence over the theme style sheet. For CSS savants, it also provides a useful way to browse CSS selectors and find out which selectors to use to control a certain page element.

The preview pane

When you first open the style editor, it displays your homepage in a preview panel. All of your edits and changes are previewed here; the changes are not applied to the live site until you click “Save.” You can change the preview page by choosing from the selection in the “Preview Page” menu, which offers the section pages for all of your active sections, followed by up to five content pages from the live site.

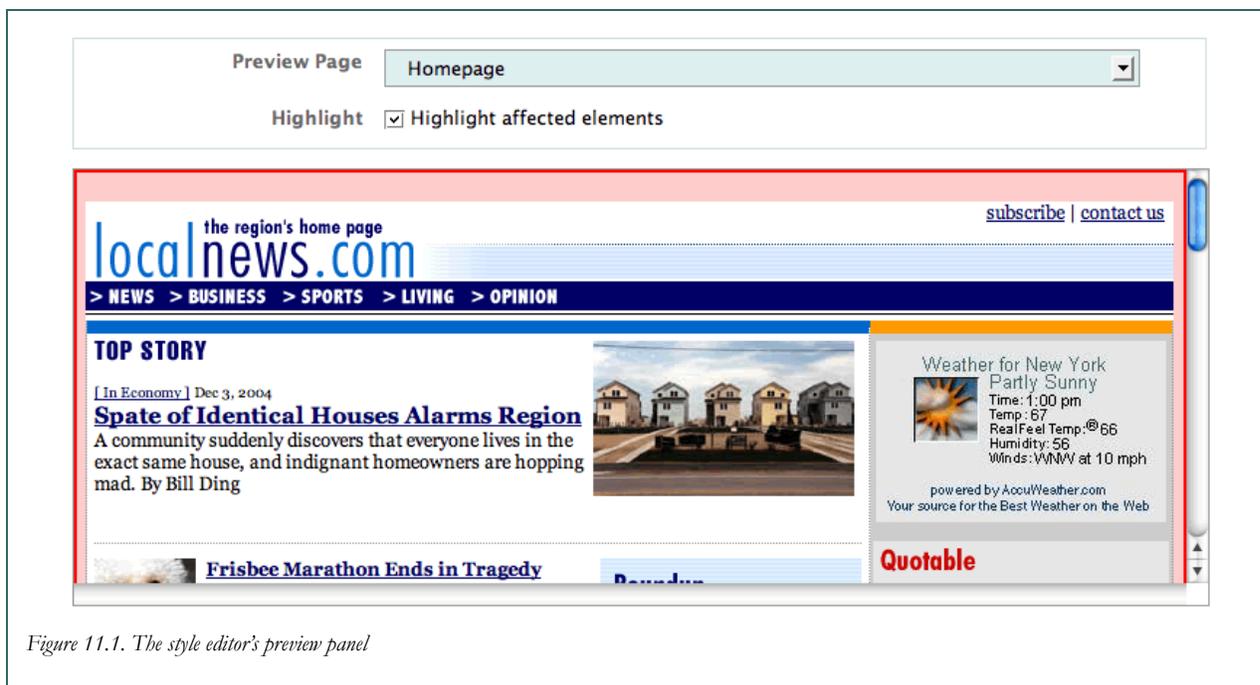


Figure 11.1. The style editor's preview panel

Select the name of the element whose style you want to adjust using the dropdown menu just below the preview pane. If the “Highlight affected elements” option is checked above the preview pane, the elements will be highlighted with a light-red background and a red border. (When you make a selection, the legend above the dropdown menu updates to display the name of the CSS selector for the element, a handy reference for CSS designers.)



Figure 11.2. Select an element to edit

The tabbed settings panel below the “style to edit” field allows you to edit the various style attributes for the selected element. Click the tab for the type of style that you want to change.

Style strategies

You don't have to set style settings for each and every available style. Leaving any setting blank for a particular portion of the page typically means that it will inherit the styles of the current context. For example, all portions of the page inherit the font of the “Page body” style unless they have their own custom font setting. This means that setting the “Page body” font style also updates the font for all portions of the page.

In general, it's a good strategy to set styles at the most general level possible. Start with the styles listed under “Default Text & Links” and then move on to the more specific styles that you want to style differently than these default styles.

If a portion of the page does not respond as you expect to your change, it probably indicates that your style is being overridden by a specifically targeted style (either by a more specific style setting in the style editor, or in the site's theme style sheet). For example, if you set *navigation menu link* (in "Navigation") to be green but subsequently set *links* (in "Default Text and Links") to blue, navigation links will remain green. That's because the most specific style is followed; although you set a general rule for links to be blue, the more specific rule for navigation links takes precedence.

Text styles

The *text styles* tab lets you change the font and text attributes for the element.

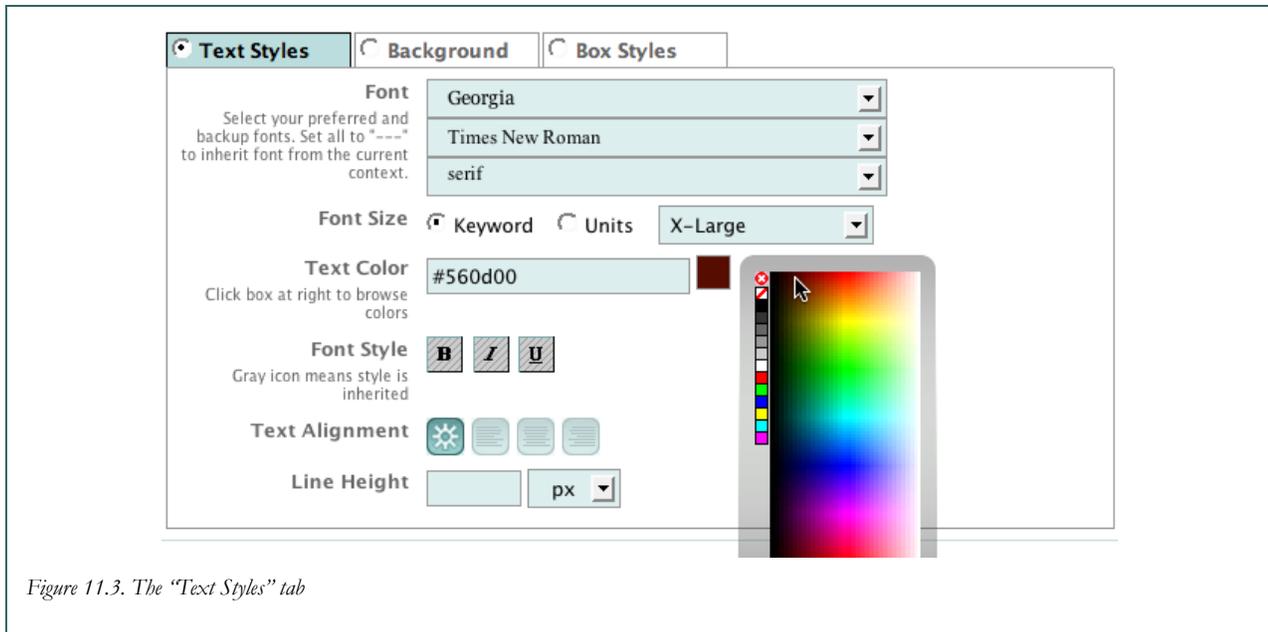


Figure 11.3. The "Text Styles" tab

Font

Select the fonts, in order of preference, that you would like the selected element to use. The second and third options are fallback options to use if your visitor does not have your first font preference installed on her computer.

Font size

Select the font size to use. Choose the "Keyword" option to select a keyword size (*x-small* through *x-large*) or click "Units" to specify a certain size in the unit of your choice: pixels (px), percent (%), ems (em), points (pt), inches (in), centimeters (cm), exes (ex) or picas (pi).

Text color

Specify the color by entering its text value into the text field, or select a color by clicking the color swatch to the right of the text box. Clicking the swatch pops up a color palette: click the color that you want to use.

Text values can be entered in three different formats:

- A six- or three-digit hexadecimal value; e.g., #ff9933 or #f93 for orange

- A color keyword (*e.g.*, transparent, aqua, black, blue, fuchsia, gray, green, lime, maroon, navy, olive, purple, red, silver, teal, white, yellow, etc)
- A RGB-format value; *e.g.*, `rgb(255, 153, 51)` or `rgb(100%, 60%, 20%)` for orange

Font style

Click the buttons to set **bold**, *italic* or underline styles for the selected element. Each button has three settings: when the button is gray, the element will inherit the value, displaying the font style of its current context; when colored, the button is active; when white, the button is off.



Text alignment

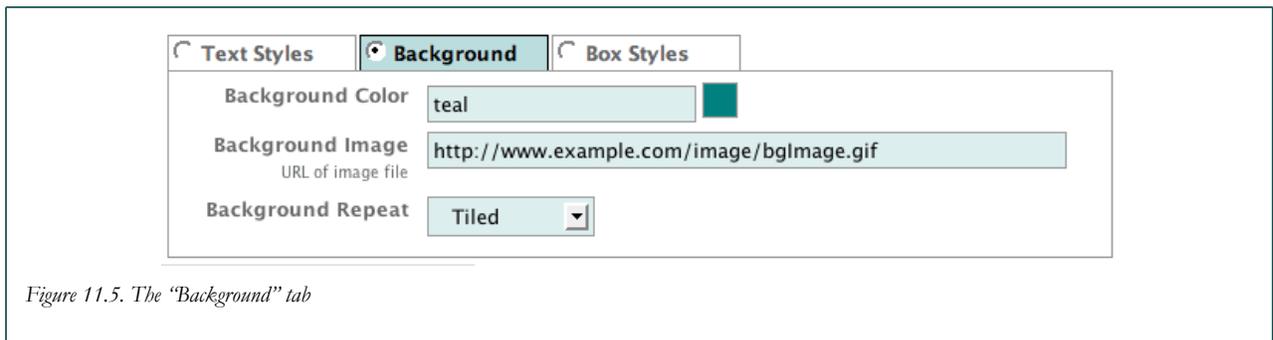
Click the button for the alignment to use; the gear icon means to use the default alignment.

Line height

Set the line height (or “leading”) to use.

Background styles

The “Background” tab lets you edit background style and image settings for the selected element.



Background color

Choose the background color for the selected element by entering a text value into the field or clicking the color swatch to bring up the color picker.

Background image

Enter the URL of an image to use as a background image for the selected element.

Background repeat

If there's a background image assigned to the element, this field affects how it's displayed.

(Inherit)	Use the default behavior
None	No repetition; display the image only once
Tiled	Repeat the image to fill the element's background horizontally and vertically
Horizontal	Repeat the image left to right, but not vertically
Vertical	Repeat the image up and down, but not horizontally

Box styles

The “Box styles” tab lets you edit the width, border and spacing around an element. When changing these settings it's helpful to think of every element on the page as a box. At the center of the box is the element itself and its content. Around this core, you can add *padding*, *border* and *margin*.

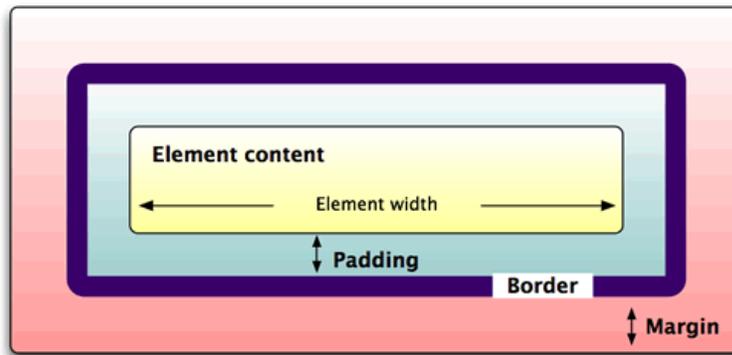
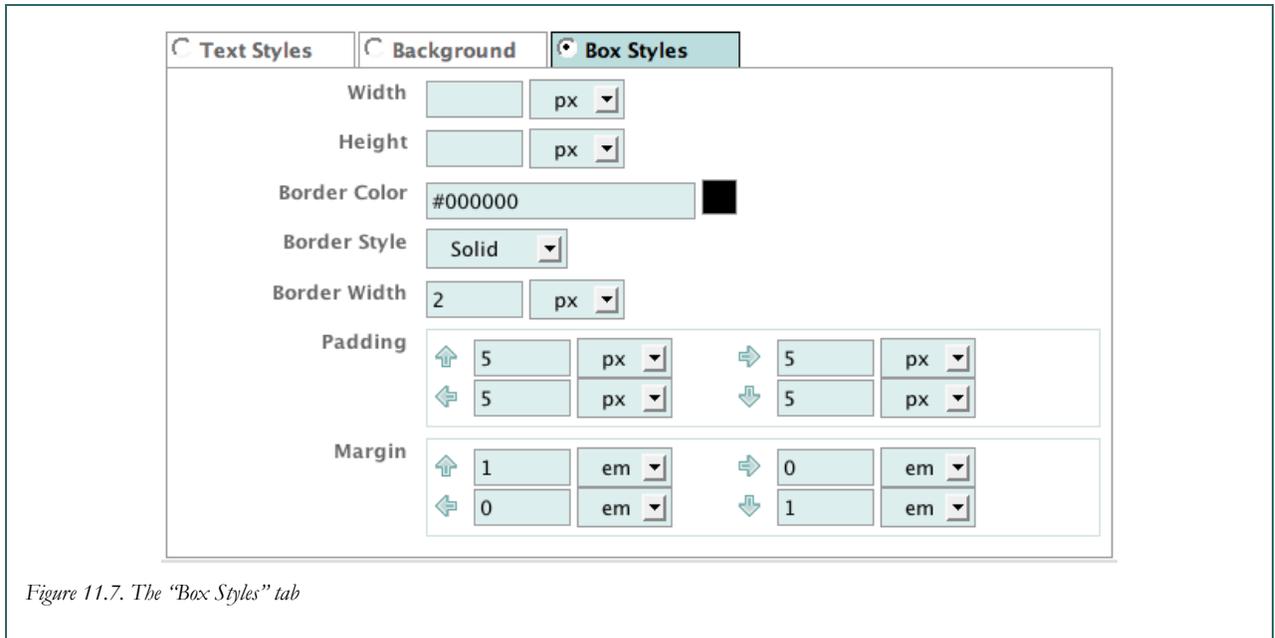


Figure 11.6. The box model

Padding	The space immediately around the element, between the element and the border, if any
Border	A line around the element, forming the frontier between the element's padding and margin, if any
Margin	The space between the element's border, if any, and other elements on the page



Width

Sets the width of the selected element to a fixed size. This width does not include the padding, border or margin width. Any padding, border or margin will be added to the width that you set here.

Height

Sets the height of the selected element to a fixed size. As with width, this height does not include the padding, border or margin width.

Border color

Set the color of the border, if there is one, by entering a value in the text field, or clicking the color swatch to bring up the color picker.

Border style

Select from *Inherit* (to use the default style), *None*, *Solid*, *Dashed*, *Dotted*, *Double*, *Groove*, *Inset*, *Outset* or *Ridge*.

Border width

Enter the width of the selected element's border, if any.

Padding

Set the padding width for any of the four sides around the selected element. The padding is added between the element and its border, if any.

Margin

Set the margin width for any of the four sides around the selected element. The margin is added between the element's border and other neighboring elements, if any.

Clearing style-editor styles

You can clear all custom styles by clicking the “Clear all custom styles” link at the top of the style editor. This does not clear the theme style sheet, only the styles set in this style editor screen. When you click the link, the styles are cleared in the preview pane, but the change does not take effect until you click “Save.”

Image Management

A picture may be worth a thousand words, but for lots of us, resizing that picture is worth a thousand headaches. Most civilians have never touched Photoshop and don't know the first thing about using an image-editing program to crop or resize their photos. Frankly, they shouldn't have to.

Big Medium handles image sizing for you and juggles the various versions of an image to make sure that the correct size goes in the right place. The site's HTML preferences give designers precise control over which image size is used in all of the various image contexts: links, body text, gallery images, slideshows, etc. Writers and editors don't have to think about pixel sizes or design requirements; they just load the original image, and Big Medium takes care of the rest. It just works.

[Chapter 3: Editing Webpages](#) discussed [the process of adding an image to a page](#) and, as a result, to the image library. This chapter expands on that discussion and aims to help designers configure their settings to get the image results that they want.

The Library Concept

When you add a new image to a page, Big Medium automatically adds it to the image library. This means that it can be reused from any page, in any context and in any size. The “any size” part is where the magic happens.

When you first add an image to the library, Big Medium automatically generates several additional versions of the image. Your photo of Aunt Sadie's prize poodle is squished and stretched¹ into a variety of different sizes: a thumbnail image for links, a slightly larger image for the gallery preview, a big image for slideshows, etc.

When you browse the image library, though, you still see just one entry for the image “Aunt Sadie's prize poodle.” Although this one image fronts for several different files and versions, Big Medium keeps those details behind the curtain and out of sight. You just select the image and say, “I want Sadie's poodle to be

¹No poodles were harmed in the making of this handbook.

shown with spotlight links and next to the fourth paragraph of my page.” Big Medium handles the rest, selecting the appropriate image sizes based on your site’s preferences for spotlight images and detail page images.

This is handy for those of us huddled among the Photoshop-illiterate masses. All we have to worry about is, “I want the poodle.” No need to think about sizing images or which image size goes where. The site’s preferences handle those details.

Image Control for Designers

If you’re a designer, of course, these details are very important. The size and handling of images affect the aesthetic of the page as well as practical details of HTML layout. Every image has to fit the space allocated for it.

Big Medium’s approach to image management gives designers the confidence to allow civilians to add images with a guarantee that image sizes will always be correct and won’t break the overall layout.

As a designer, you can even stock the image library with a set of images for writers and editors to use later. They can browse the library to add these stock images to pages, and Big Medium will automatically use the correct image size based on where and how they want it to appear. Once in the library, an image can be used from any page and in any context; you might have originally added an image to be used in the body text of one page, but you can use it again in the gallery of another, etc.

If the site’s design changes down the road and you need to change the image size for, say, link images, you just change a preference and, voilà!, all of the images are immediately updated to use the new size.

Accounts with webmaster and administrator privileges can change these settings in the “Images” and “Links” HTML preferences for the site; the “HTML Preferences” screen is available in the “Settings” menu. For link images, every type of link widget can be customized to display its own image size. And, as with most HTML preferences, you can also customize these image settings for individual sections from the [“Section Properties”](#) screen in the “Settings” menu.

Adding Custom Image Sizes

By default, Big Medium manages images in the following sizes:

- Original (the original image, untouched)
- Thumbnail (60x60 pixels)
- X-small (100x100 pixels)
- Small (200x200 pixels)
- Medium (400x400 pixels)
- Large (600x600 pixels)
- X-Large (800x800 pixels)

If these default image sizes don't include the exact size that your page design requires, accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can add custom image sizes in the "Site Image Formats" screen in the "Settings" menu.

The "Site Image Formats" screen displays the scaling methods for the default image sizes (more on that in a sec), followed by the list of custom formats, if any, and finally the "Add New Image Format" link.

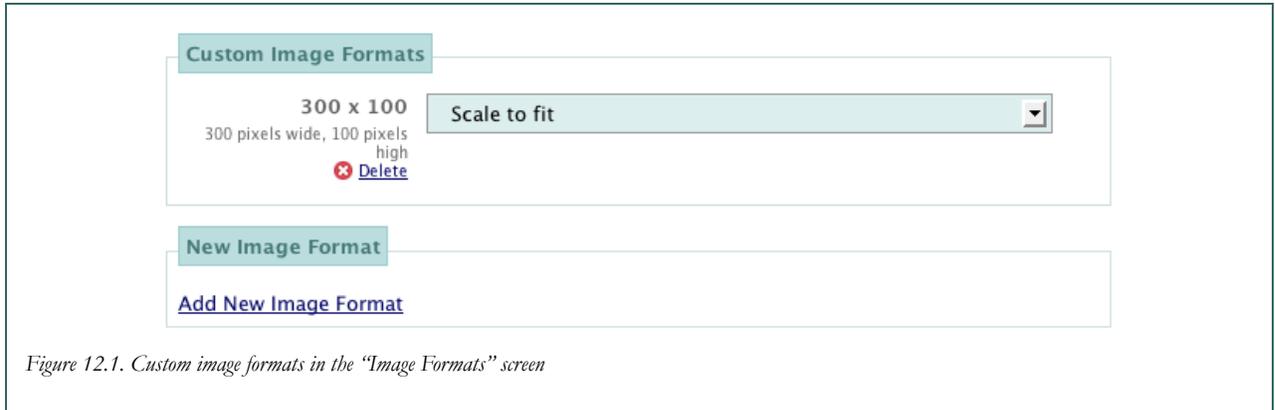


Figure 12.1. Custom image formats in the "Image Formats" screen

Click the "Add New Image Format" link to display a form with two fields for the width and height of your custom image format. Big Medium does not, by default, enforce the *exact* dimensions that you enter here. We'll get into this a bit more in the "[Scaling Methods](#)" section, but these dimensions represent the *maximum* height and width of the image, the *bounding box* in which the image must be contained.

Big Medium's default scaling method is "scale to fit" which squeezes the image into the bounding box without changing its original proportions. For example, let's say that you have a 300x300 custom image size, and you load a 400x800 image, a picture that's twice as tall as it is wide. Big Medium will shrink the image so that its height (its longest side) fits inside our 300-pixel maximum height. Keeping the original proportions of height being twice the width, the width of our scaled image becomes 150 pixels. So, while the image format is 300x300, the result is an image that is 150x300.

If you need to size images to exact pixel dimensions, you can do that, too, as we discuss below with the "crop to fit" and "scale and crop" scaling methods. For now, just keep in mind that the dimensions that you set here are *maximum dimensions* that trace out only the outer boundary into which your images must fit.

After you enter the dimensions of your new format, click "Save." Big Medium adds the new image size to the "Custom Image Formats" panel. This panel allows you to change the scaling method for your custom image(s) or delete custom formats.

After adding an image format, the custom format becomes available as an option in the various image-size settings in the site's HTML preferences. To make link images start using your new format, for example, go to the "Links" HTML preferences and select your new size in the "Link Image Size" preference for the appropriate widgets.

Note that current library images are not updated when you add or delete image formats. These settings affect only images that are added going forward. You'll need to edit and replace the existing image to make Big Medium generate the new size.



Can I specify just the width? I don't care how tall an image is, but I do want a consistent width.

Say that you want images in a certain format to be consistently 150 pixels wide, and the specific height is unimportant. A custom image format with a width of 150 and a very large height, like 1000, will give you what you need. When the scaling method is set to “scale to fit,” the image will be reduced to fit into the 150x1000 box. Unless its proportions are outlandishly tall, the image will be exactly 150 pixels wide, and its height will be set proportionally.

To get exact dimensions for both height and width, use the “crop to fit” or “scale and crop” method for your custom image format.

Scaling Methods

Every image format has a scaling method which tells Big Medium exactly how it should alter the image in order to make it fit into the specified dimensions. The “Image Formats” screen lets you change the scaling methods for all image sizes, both default and custom formats.

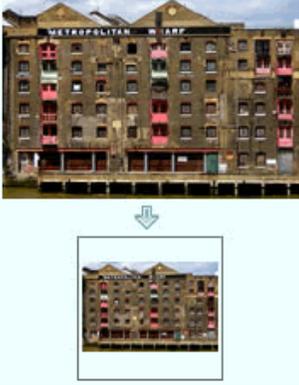
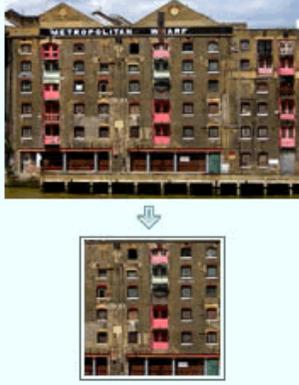
Scale to fit	Crop to fit	Scale and crop
Reduce image to fit into the bounding dimensions, keeping the original proportions.	Crop image to fit into the bounding dimensions, with little or no size reduction.	Reduce the image to the smallest size that still fills the bounding dimensions, cropping any overflow.
		
Scaling Methods for Built-In Sizes		
Thumbnail 60x60 pixels	Scale and crop	
X-Small 100x100 pixels	Scale and crop	
Small 200x200 pixels	Scale to fit	

Figure 12.2. Scaling methods in the “Image Formats” screen

There are three scaling methods:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Scale to fit | The image is reduced to the largest size that fits into the format's bounding box while still keeping its original proportions. As described in the previous section, this means that the final dimensions of scaled images can vary from image to image, depending on the image's aspect ratio, but they are guaranteed to fit within the maximum height/width of the format's dimensions. This is the default method for all of Big Medium's built-in sizes, except for thumbnail and x-small. |
| Crop to fit | The image is cropped to fit the exact size of the format's height and width dimensions, with little or no size reduction. The effect is like looking through a window at the original image; any portion of the image outside of the height and width of this window is lopped off. |
| Scale and crop | The image is reduced to the smallest size that completely fills the format's height and width dimensions, and any overflow is cropped. As with "crop to fit," the resulting image matches the exact pixel dimensions defined by the format size, but the image is reduced to display as much of the original image as possible within these dimensions. This is the default method for the built-in thumbnail and x-small formats. |

To change a format's scaling method, select a new method in its selection menu, and click "Save" at the bottom of the page. Note that current library images are not updated when you change a scaling method. Changes apply only to new images that are added going forward. You'll need to edit and replace the existing image to make Big Medium generate the new size.

Account Management

Big Medium allows lots of people to collaborate in establishing, editing and maintaining sites. Administrators and webmasters can create an unlimited number of accounts for every participant, each with its own user name, password and a set range of access privileges.

Account privileges

Big Medium can manage multiple websites on a single server, and site editors can access only the sites for which they have been granted site privileges. Each account has one of five levels of access privileges to a specific set of websites in your Big Medium system. These account levels are: *writers*, *editors*, *publishers*, *webmasters* and *administrators*.

Writers, editors and publishers are primarily occupied with adding and editing site content. Webmasters and administrators can do that, too, but also have broad permission to edit site design, change settings and add/edit accounts. Figure 13.1 shows a comparison of account privileges.

Every level of account has a slightly modified view of the control panel; menu options are displayed only if your account is allowed to access them, so writer and editor accounts have a much-simplified control panel compared to administrators.

Editing or deleting accounts

You can change the user name, e-mail address and password for your own account by selecting “My Account.” For webmasters and administrators, this option is in the “Accounts” menu; for other account types, click the “My Account” icon at the top of the control panel.

Webmasters and administrators can edit or delete other users’ accounts by selecting “Search Accounts” or “Show All Accounts” from the Accounts menu. Administrators can edit any account. Webmasters can edit accounts with privileges only at sites where the webmaster also has privileges.

Action	Writer	Editor	Publisher	Webmaster	Admin
Add and edit pages	★	★	★	★	★
Edit pages owned by others		★	★	★	★
Edit published pages			★	★	★
Publish/unpublish pages			★	★	★
Edit homepage/section pages			★	★	★
Add, edit, delete sections				★	★
Edit templates				★	★
Edit theme style sheet				★	★
Use style editor				★	★
Edit HTML preferences				★	★
Edit section properties				★	★
Edit site properties				★	★
Add and edit accounts				★	★
Edit site URLs, directories					★
Add new sites					★
Delete sites					★
Edit systemwide settings					★

Figure 13.1. Account privileges

To search for the account to edit, enter your search criteria into the form, or click “Show all accounts” and click on the account to edit.

To delete an account, you follow a similar process: Enter your search criteria into the account menu’s search form, or click “Show all accounts.” Check the box next to the account(s) to delete and click the “Delete” button at the top of the menu.

When you delete an account, the account is removed from the system and is no longer allowed to sign into Big Medium. Our deleted friend may be gone, but his pages remain. Any content that was created or edited by this account remains in the system, untouched.

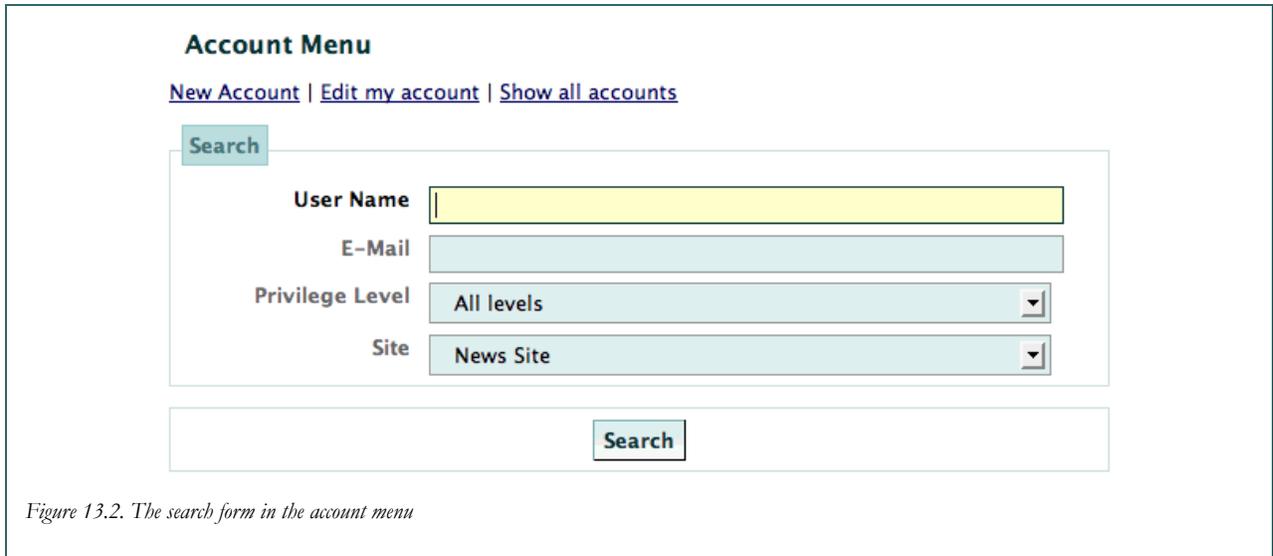


Figure 13.2. The search form in the account menu

Site and section privileges

Webmasters and administrators can set the site privileges of other accounts from the account edit screen (you cannot edit your own account’s privileges, however). The “site privileges” panel displays a snapshot of the account’s current editing privileges.



Figure 13.3. The site privileges panel

The “privilege level” field indicates the default editing privileges for the account. When you grant editing privileges to the account at a new site, this is the initial level of privileges that the account is granted. However, the privilege level can be customized for any site. So, an account can have writer privileges at one site but webmaster privileges at another.

If you change the account’s default privilege level, that change is applied to all sites where the site has the old privilege level. So, if you upgrade a writer to editor, all sites where the account formerly had writer

privileges will see that change applied; privileges at other sites are left unchanged.

Below the “privilege level” field, the account edit screen displays all of the sites where the account has editing privileges. To add a new site, click the “Add site” link, and select the site(s) to add. To cancel editing privileges at a site, click the “cancel privileges” link in the privilege box for that site.

When you give an account editing privileges at a site, the account is initially given permission to add and edit content in any section of the site at their default privilege level. You can give more definition to these privileges by clicking the “customize” link in the privilege box for the site. A form appears allowing you to customize the privilege level and specific sections that the account may edit.

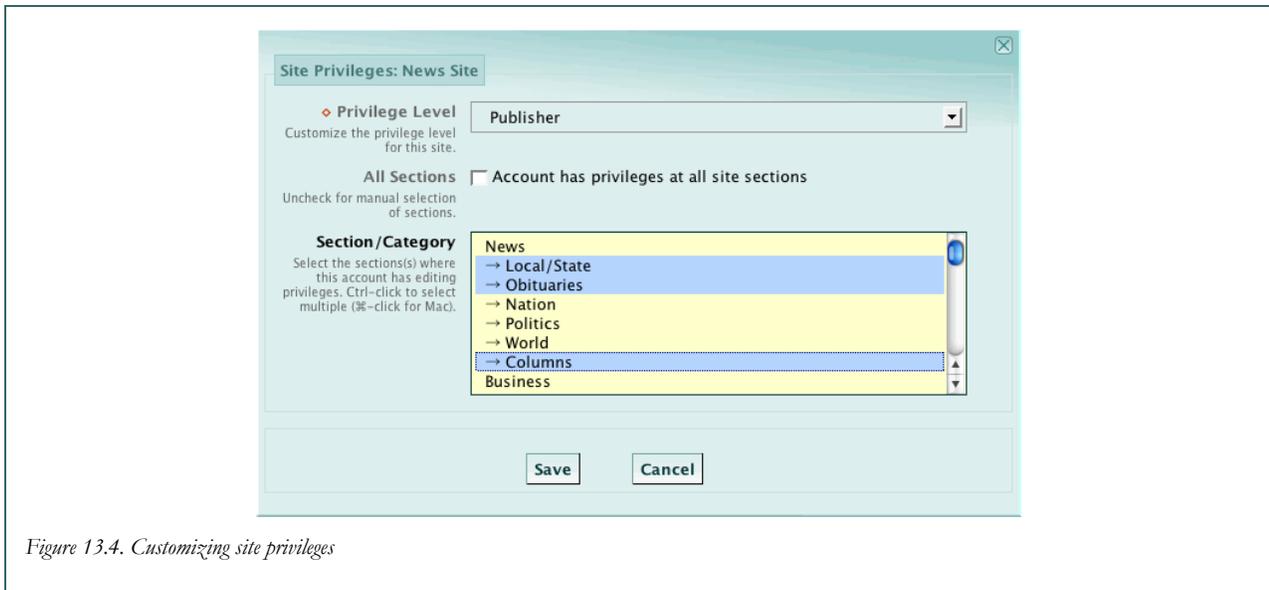


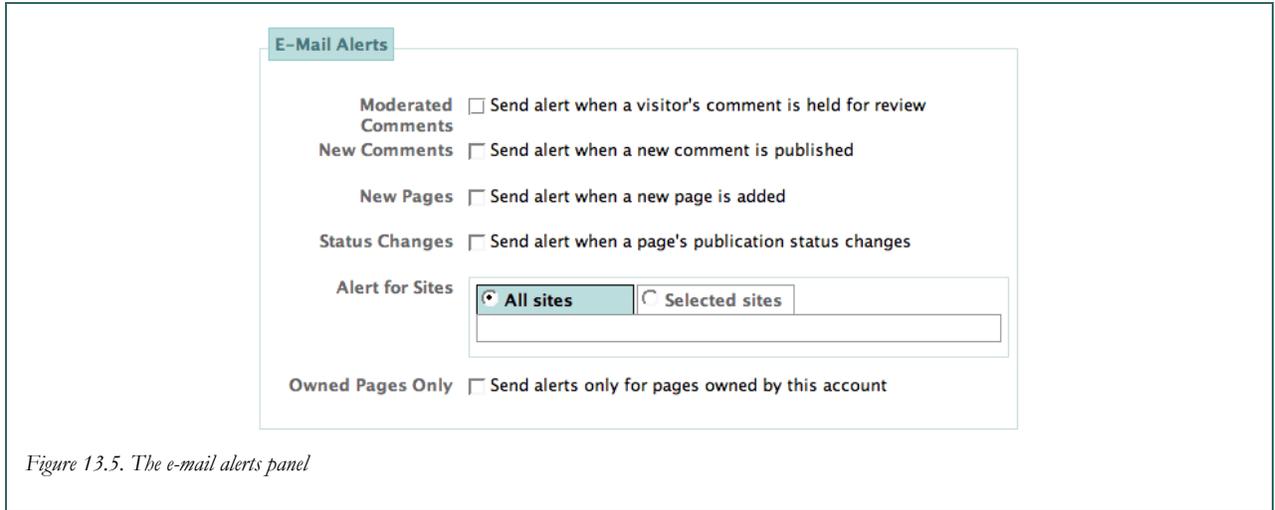
Figure 13.4. Customizing site privileges

To give the account privileges at all sites, leave the “account has privileges at all site sections” option checked. Unchecking the option allows you to select a more limited set of sections. The account can add or edit content only when it is specifically assigned to one of the selected sections.

Note: Publishers can edit the homepage only if the “account has privileges at all site sections” option is selected.

E-mail alerts

The account edit screen allows you to subscribe to e-mail alerts for certain events. To do so, check the types of alerts you would like to receive. Select “All sites” to receive alerts for all sites to which you have privileges, or click “Selected sites” and highlight the specific sites for which you would like alerts. You can also specify if you want to receive alerts only for pages owned by you.



The available types of alerts:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Moderated comments | Available only for accounts with publisher privileges or better: Receive an e-mail alert when a visitor has submitted a comment which has been held for review. |
| New comments | Receive an e-mail alert when a new visitor comment is added to a page. (Accounts with writer privileges receive alerts only for comments added to pages they own.) |
| New pages | Receive an e-mail alert when a new page is added to the Big Medium system. (Not available for accounts with writer privileges). |
| Status changes | Receive an e-mail alert when a page changes publication status. (Accounts with writer privileges receive alerts only for pages they own.) |

Site and System Properties

Site Properties

Site properties consist of a handful of site settings that apply not only to the appearance of the public site but also its behavior in the control panel. Accounts with webmaster or administrator privileges can edit a site's properties by going to "Site Properties" in the "Settings" menu.

Site Title

Edit the site's name in the "Website Name" field. The site cannot share a name with other sites in your Big Medium system; when you click to a new field, Big Medium will automatically check the name for you to make sure that the name is valid and available.

Website's Local Time

Time zone offset

This setting tells Big Medium the time zone for your site and determines the time and date that will be displayed for items in both the control panel and your public site. The value of the setting is the amount of time by which your site's local time differs from Greenwich Mean Time, also known as Universal Time.

You're forgiven if you have no clue what this time difference might be. (What, no family in Greenwich, England?). Big Medium tries to help you out by showing you the time zone offset for where you're sitting at the moment, along with the effective time for the currently selected time zone offset. When you change the setting, the displayed time updates to reflect the change.

Time format

This setting determines the format used to display the time of day in both the control panel and the public site. Select your preference from the pulldown menu.

Date format

This setting determines the format used to display the date in both the control panel and the public site. Select your preference from the many, many, many options in the pulldown menu.

Upload limit

This setting specifies the maximum size of files that the site's editors may add to the site. The limit cannot exceed the systemwide limit that administrators set in the [“File Upload Limits”](#) screen.

Site Properties

Site Title

▶ [Help!](#)

◊ **Website Name** News Site
The official name of your website

Website's Local Time

▶ [Help!](#)

Time Zone Offset + : 1 : 00
The difference in hours and minutes from Greenwich Mean Time
Hint: The time zone offset where you're sitting now is +1:00. The displayed setting makes the local website time: **6:48pm**.

Time Format 12-hour time (6:48pm)

Date Format Mon D, YYYY (Nov 10, 2006)

Upload Limit

◊ **Maximum File Size** 5 Megabytes
The maximum file size cannot exceed the systemwide limit of 5.0 MB

Figure 14.1. The “Site Properties” screen

Site URLs and Directories

Accounts with administrator privileges can edit the URLs and directories for the site by selecting “Site URLs and Directories” from the “Settings” menu.

The URL and directory settings affect, respectively, the links that Big Medium uses for the published pages

and the physical location on the server where the site's files are stored. When you make changes to the directory path for either the homepage or the page directory, Big Medium automatically moves all of the Big Medium-related files from the old location to the new one for you.

Typical occasions for changing these settings:

- You've developed your new Big Medium site in a staging directory of your server, and you're ready to take it public by moving it to its "live" location.
- You're changing the site to a new domain name.
- You're moving the site to a new server.

The "Site URLs and Directories" screen offers four fields for updating the location of the *homepage directory* and *page directory*.

Homepage directory URL

This is the URL of the directory for your site's homepage. For most sites, the URL is simply the site's domain name, the "root directory" of your website. For example:

```
http://www.example.com
```

Page directory URL

The page directory is where Big Medium stores all of the other (non-homepage) web pages and supporting files for your site. While not required, it's good hygiene to make this a separate directory instead of your straight-up domain name. Some examples:

```
http://www.example.com/bm  
http://www.example.com/content  
http://www.example.com/pages
```

Homepage directory path

This is the file path to the physical directory on your server where the homepage is located. It should correspond to the URL that you entered for the homepage directory. If you're not sure of the path, check with your server administrator or hosting company.

Page directory path

This is the file path to the physical directory on your server where all of Big Medium's non-homepage files are stored. It should correspond to the URL that you entered for the page directory. If you're not sure of the path, check with your server administrator or hosting company.

Saving and confirming changes

After making your changes, click the "Save" button. Big Medium saves your changes and, if you've changed either of the directory paths, moves its files to the new location. To check that all is well, Big Medium asks you to confirm that you can see two images. Follow the instructions to confirm the directories.

File Upload Limits

For security, Big Medium limits the types and size of files that can be uploaded to your Big Medium installation. Accounts with administrator access can edit these settings in the “File Upload Limits” screen of the “Settings” menu. *These settings apply to all sites in your installation of Big Medium.*

The “Maximum File Size” field lets you specify the upper limit of files that can be loaded to the server. However, every individual site also has its own file-size limit which can be set in the site’s “site properties” screen. These site-specific settings can be lower than the systemwide maximum that you set in the “File Upload Limits” screen, but they cannot exceed this systemwide limit.

This screen also displays four categories of files, each with several popular file types. Check all of the file types to allow.

If you want to add a file type that’s not listed on the page, you can add your own custom file types by typing their file extensions (*e.g.*, doc, pdf, xls) into the “Allow these extensions” field at the bottom of the page.



Be careful!

It is strongly recommended that you do not allow scripts or other executable files that could cause mischief on your server (php, pl, cgi, etcetera). These file types are not included in the file-upload list, and it’s recommended that you do not include them in the custom “Allow these extensions” field.

Managing Multiple Sites

A single installation of Big Medium can manage hundreds of sites on the same server, each with its own distinct design and content. This is handy for companies managing several sites for different products or audiences, for schools that have separate sites for each teacher, or for nonprofits that have separate sites for individual programs.

Adding a New Site

Accounts with administrator privileges can add new sites to Big Medium by clicking the “New Site” link in the “Settings” menu.

Step one: Site name, URLs and Directories

The “New Site” screen prompts you for the name, URLs and directories for your site. These are the same fields that we described in the [“Site URLs and Directories”](#) section of the [Chapter 14: Site and System Properties](#) chapter. You need to supply the URLs and directory paths for two directories: the *homepage directory* and the *page directory*.

The homepage directory

The path and URL of the homepage directory is where you would like Big Medium to build and store the homepage for this site. In most cases, this is the web root directory of your site. For example:

```
http://www.example.com
```

However, if you already have an existing site, you may want to set this to a temporary directory so that your new site does not interfere with your current site until it’s ready to go. For example:

```
http://www.example.com/bm
```

The page directory

The path and URL of the directory where you would like Big Medium to build and store all of the non-homepage files and pages for your site.

After choosing the name, URLs, directories and time zone for your new site, click “Save.”

You’ll be asked to confirm that you can see two images. If you can, this indicates that you have filled in the correct values for your site directories and URLs. If not, you need to try again. Click the “Yes” link if you see the image, or click “No” if not.

Step two: Create content sections

The next screen takes you to the “Section Structure” page for the site to create the sections for the new site.



Figure 15.1. Step two: Create content sections

To add a new section, click the “Add main section” link and give the section a title and slug name.

To add subsections to your new section, click the section name and then “Add subsection” and fill out the form with the title and slug name of the new subsection. When you have created your sections—or at least enough to get started—click “Save.”

Step three: Choose a design theme

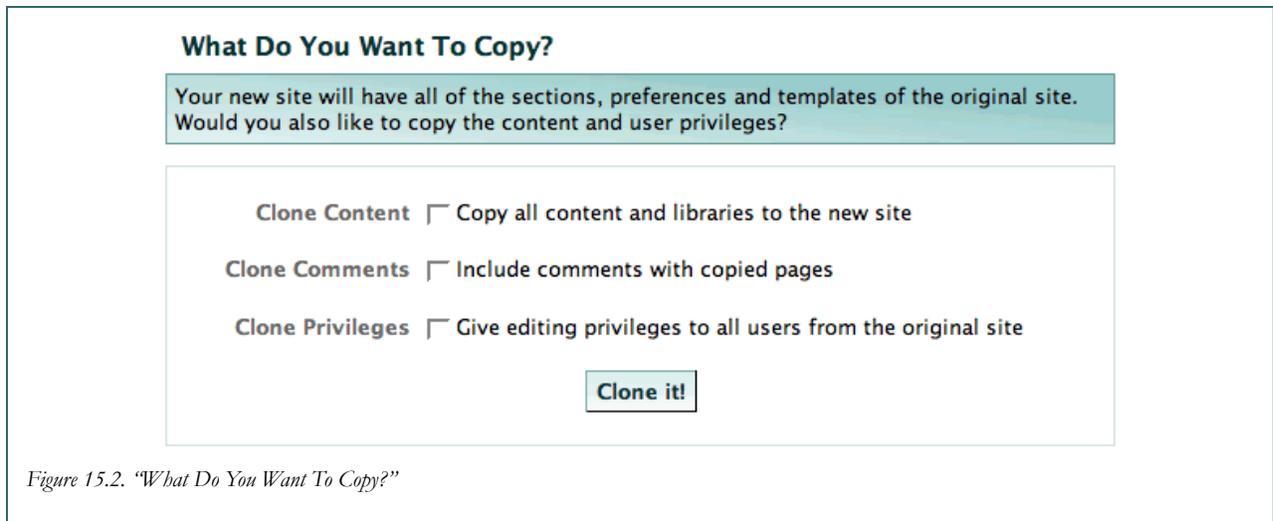
The final stop takes you to the theme library where you’re prompted to select a design theme for the site. Select a design theme by clicking “Apply” next to the theme that you want (or “details” to see a preview). Never fear, you won’t be locked in. You can choose another theme later, customize this theme, or create your own design from scratch. For now, choose a theme to get started.

And that’s it, you’re done. Big Medium takes you to the page editor for the new site, and you’re ready to start editing right away.

Cloning a Site

A *clone* is a copy of an existing site, with all of the original site’s templates, styles, preferences and section structure. Accounts with administrator privileges can clone a site by signing into that site and choosing “Clone This Site” from the “Settings” menu.

The first step of the cloning process is the same as adding a new site; you specify the name of the new site along with its URL and directory locations. After confirming that you can see test images, one last screen asks what additional items you would like to copy to the new site.



By default, website clones are empty; they have no content, just the empty design shell of the original site. The “What Do You Want To Copy?” screen offers you the option to clone the original site’s content (along with the additional option to copy visitor comments) and user privileges. If you do not clone user privileges, then only administrators will be able to edit the site until you grant additional users permission to edit the new site.

After choosing your preferences, click “Clone It!” A progress bar appears, and Big Medium creates and formats the new site for you. (If you are copying content for a large site, this process could take a while; grab a cup of coffee.)

After the update is complete, Big Medium takes you to the edit menu of the new site.

Managing Sites in Different Domains

A single installation of Big Medium can manage sites in different domains, too, with a couple of caveats. First, the domains must be hosted on the same server as the one where Big Medium is installed. Second, Big Medium has to have permission to edit the web directories for those domains.

In a nutshell: scripts in the domain where you install Big Medium must be allowed to have access to the files in the web directories of the domains that you would like Big Medium to manage.

This is easily arranged if you’re hosting your own dedicated server. but if you rent web space from a hosting

company, things sometimes get trickier. For quite valid security reasons, hosting companies often seal off each domain's web directory so that customers cannot tamper with each other's files. Unfortunately, this often means that Big Medium does not have permission to manage the site files in domains other than the one where it is installed. If that's the case, Big Medium will complain about permission problems when you try to set up a new site in the other domain.

This can often be remedied, however. Many hosting companies allow you to set up domains under the same web account as one "master" domain. Scripts installed in the master domain have permission to manage the files in these secondary domains. (Pair Networks and Dreamhost are two well regarded hosting companies¹ that allow you to do this.) Check with your hosting company's tech support team for details or help. They should be able to help you to configure your domains to allow scripts installed in one domain (the Big Medium scripts, in this case) to have read/write permission to the files in your other domains.



What if my hosting company tells me it's not possible?

You have a few options:

1. Install Big Medium separately into each domain that you would like to host.

Please be aware that this requires additional licenses. Big Medium's license agreement requires an individual license for each installation.

2. Move to a new hosting company.

There are hosting companies that can help you to get this set up. The aforementioned DreamHost and TextDrive are two of them.

3. Last resort: Make your domains' web directories world-writable.

The web directory for individual domains is often named either `public_html` or `www`. In Unix-based servers, you make a directory world-writable by setting permissions to `chmod 777`.

This is not at all secure. Doing this means that others with web accounts on the same server also have read/write permissions to your web directory, not just your Big Medium scripts. It will work, but it invites trouble. If you decide to do this anyway, you should set your security settings to "low" in the "Big Medium Server Info" screen of the "Settings" menu.

Deleting Sites

Accounts with administrator privileges can delete sites from the "Review/Delete Sites" screen in the "Settings" menu. Check the site(s) to delete, and click the "Delete" button at the top of the list of sites.

¹Many customers have told me good thing about both [Pair Networks](http://www.pair.com/) [http://www.pair.com/] and [DreamHost](http://www.dreamhost.com/) [http://www.dreamhost.com/], but I haven't used them myself and can't personally endorse them. Your mileage may vary.



Be careful!

When you delete a site, all of its content data is permanently removed from your server, along with its public HTML files and pages. *This cannot be undone.*

All of the Big Medium section slug directories in the site's page directory will be deleted. If you keep any non-Big-Medium files inside these directories that you would like to save, you must move them out of those directories before deleting the site, or they will be permanently deleted along with the Big Medium files.

When you delete a site, all of the site's data (including content, images, documents and other media) is removed from the Big Medium system, and all Big Medium-generated files are removed from the public site, too.

The site's homepage directory and the page directory are not deleted, only the Big Medium files and directories inside of them.

Backups and Server Moves

Backing Up Your Data

If you run Big Medium on a hosted web account, your hosting company likely keeps regular backups; and since Big Medium stores its data as plain text, these backups should have no problem backing up Big Medium along the way.

That said, better safe than sorry. Not all hosting companies are equal, and some have poor backup strategies or, worse, they say that they're backing up your data but come up empty-handed when you need it. It's not a bad idea to be a little paranoid and take matters into your own hands.

The data files

The important data files to backup are located in three subdirectories of your server's `moxiedata` directory:

- `counters`
- `data`
- `templates_custom`

If you want to download the data to your local hard drive, you can just FTP to the server and download these directories as-is (be sure that your FTP client is set to “plain text” or “ASCII” mode).

If you have command-line access to the server, you can speed things up by first compressing these directories into a single file.

For Unix servers, the following commands will pack the `counters`, `data`, and `templates_custom`

directories into a single compressed file named `backup.tar.gz` (change `/path/to/moxiedata` to the actual path of your server's `moxiedata` directory):

```
cd /path/to/moxiedata
tar -cf - counters data templates_custom | gzip -c > backup.tar.gz
```

You can now download this compressed file via FTP (make sure that your FTP client is set to “binary” mode).



Compress the directories for large sites

If your Big Medium installation includes sites with more than 1000 pages, you should zip your directories into a single compressed file as described above. Many FTP servers truncate long lists of pages, and unless you compress the directories into a single file, your FTP client may not see all of the files that are needed for a complete backup.

Images and documents

If you have uploaded images or documents to your site via Big Medium, you should also make backups of the image and document directories for each site. These directories are located in the Big Medium page directory of each site:

- `bm~doc`
- `bm~pix`

If you have not uploaded documents or media files to the site via Big Medium, the `bm~doc` directory may not exist, and that's OK. The same goes for image files and `bm~pix`.

You can download these files as-is via FTP (making sure that your FTP client is set to “binary,” “automatic” or “auto-detect” mode). Or, as described in the section above, you can first compress the two directories into a single compact file if you have access to your server's command line.

For Unix servers, the following commands will pack the `bm~doc` and `bm~pix` directories into a single compressed file named `documents.tar.gz` (change `/path/to/html/pagedir` to the actual path of the site's page directory):

```
cd /path/to/html/pagedir
tar -cf - bm~doc bm~pix | gzip -c > documents.tar.gz
```

Download the compressed `documents.tar.gz`, making sure that your FTP client is set to “binary” mode.



What about the HTML files?

You can make backups of those, too, if you like, but as long as Big Medium has its data files, it can always rebuild the HTML files in a matter of seconds. As long as you have backups of the

files described above, you'll always be able to restore your Big Medium site in case of a server crash or other data loss.

Restoring from backup

First, of course, you need to have a backup. These instructions assume that either your hosting provider has a backup of your data, or that you previously made your own backup of your Big Medium data as described above.

Reinstalling the application?

If you need to restore your entire Big Medium installation, including the Big Medium application itself, you should first do a fresh installation of Big Medium, following [the installation instructions](#) through the second step of the setup wizard. When you're prompted to create your first administrator account, you can stop and continue with the data restoration described below.

Restore the three data directories

Three directories in the `moxiedata` directory hold all of Big Medium's data:

- `counters`
- `data`
- `templates_custom`

If your hosting company has the backup, ask the tech support team to restore those three directories (and all of their contents) and place them in the `moxiedata` directory. Or, if you have an offline backup of the three directories, upload them to the `moxiedata` directory via FTP, making sure that your FTP client is set to "plain text" or "ASCII" mode.

Rebuild your sites

After restoring the data directories, sign into Big Medium and rebuild all pages for each site. After doing this, all of the sites in your Big Medium system should be back to normal, except for any uploaded images and documents.

Restore the image and document directories

Images and documents uploaded to your sites via Big Medium are stored in two directories in each site's page directory:

- `bm~doc`
- `bm~pix`

If you never uploaded documents or media files to the site, the `bm~doc` directory will not exist, and that's OK. The same goes for image files and the `bm~pix` directory. If your hosting company has the backup, ask the tech support team to restore those directories (and all of their contents) into each site's page directory. Or, if you have an offline backup of these directories, upload each site's directories into its respective page directory via FTP, making sure that your FTP client is set to "binary" mode.

Moving to a New Server

To move your Big Medium installation to a new server, install a fresh version of Big Medium at the new server, following [the installation instructions](#) through the second step of the setup wizard. When you're prompted to create your first administrator account, you can stop and continue with the data restoration described below.

1. Make a copy of Big Medium's data directories and each site's document and image directories as described above in "Backing Up Your Data".
2. Upload the data, document and image directories as described above in "Restoring from backup".



Update your directory paths

If the directory paths for your site(s) have changed with the server move, follow this additional step before following step 2 above: Sign into each site and go to its "Site URLs and Directories" screen, updating the directories as described in the "[Site URLs and Directories](#)" section of *Chapter 14: Site and System Properties*.

Installing Big Medium

For all of its power and flexibility, Big Medium was designed to work on just about any web server, without requiring other applications, database systems or expensive consultants. With only an FTP program and some basic knowledge of your web server, you can get Big Medium up and running within the hour.

Quick Start

Here's a quick summary of how to install Big Medium; it's a highly compressed version of what follows in the rest of these installation instructions. If you've installed Big Medium 2 before, or if you're upgrading from a previous version of Big Medium 2, these steps will likely give you everything you need. If you require more detail, or if this is your first time installing Big Medium 2, [skip this section](#) and follow the detailed instructions.

1. Unzip the Big Medium download package.
2. Upload the `moxiebin` directory to your server's `cgi bin`.
3. For Unix-based servers, set permissions to `chmod 755` for the `moxiebin` directory and the `.cgi` files inside.
4. Upload the `moxiedata` directory to a location above your web root directory.

Upgrading from a previous version of Big Medium 2? Do not delete the file named `bm-setup.pl` in your server's `moxiebin` directory.

Upgrading from a previous version of Big Medium 2? Do not delete any existing directories in your server's `moxiedata` directory when you upload the new files. You can add or update files to existing directories, just be sure not to delete them. Do not make any changes at all to the `counters`, `data`, `search`, `templates_custom` or `user_data` directories.

5. Upload the `bmadmin` directory to your server's public HTML directory.

Upgrading from a previous version of Big Medium 2? Do not delete or replace the

`bmadmin/themes/_custom` directory (if it exists).

6. Edit `bmadmin/index.html` to update the two marked URLs for the correct `moxiebin` location on your server.
7. If you are upgrading from a previous version of Big Medium 2, browse to `bm-update.cgi` in your `moxiebin` directory, and your upgrade is complete:

```
http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-update.cgi
```

8. For new installations, set up a `cron` job to run Big Medium's maintenance script every 15 minutes. For Unix-based servers, use the following command (updated to reflect the actual location of your `moxiebin` directory):

```
curl -s -o /dev/null http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

9. For new installations, browse to `bm-start.cgi` in your `moxiebin` directory to run the setup wizard, and your installation is complete:

```
http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-start.cgi
```

Server Requirements

To install Big Medium, you must have the following:

Access to a web server	Big Medium is software that runs on your web server. It supports servers running Windows and Unix-based operating systems (including Linux, OSX, Solaris, etc.).
Perl 5.6.1 or higher	Most web servers have Perl installed, but check to make sure before installing Big Medium. Big Medium requires Perl 5.6.1 or higher and will not run with previous versions. (If your server has an older version of Perl, that means your hosting company hasn't updated the system since at least 2002; you might gently suggest that they upgrade.)
CGI access	You must have the ability to run custom CGI scripts on your web server.
Server-side includes	Your web server should support server-side includes for files with the <code>.shtml</code> extension.
FTP access	Required to load Big Medium's files to your server.



What is FTP?

FTP stands for “file transfer protocol.” FTP allows you to move files to and from your web server and, on Unix servers, also allows you to set file permissions on those files. Many free or inexpensive FTP programs may be downloaded from the web. Popular FTP programs for Windows include WS_FTP and CuteFTP. FTP programs for Macintosh include Transit, Fetch and Interarchy.

Image library strongly recommended

Although not required to use Big Medium, it is highly recommended that you have one of these four image libraries installed on your server:

- [ImageMagick and PerlMagick](#)¹, with Perl::Magick module
- [GD](#)²
- [Imager](#)³
- [NetPBM](#)⁴

With at least one of these libraries installed on your server, Big Medium can size and manage your images for you automatically.

Installing these graphics packages is not for the faint of heart and does require server administration know-how. Check with your hosting company or server admin for help with installation.

Browser Compatibility

Big Medium control panel

The Big Medium control panel requires a modern web browser. The following browsers and minimum version numbers are recommended:

- Internet Explorer 6+
- Firefox 1.5+
- Camino 1.0+
- Netscape 7+

¹ <http://www.imagemagick.org/script/perl-magick.php>

² <http://search.cpan.org/dist/GD/>

³ <http://search.cpan.org/dist/Imager/>

⁴ <http://netpbm.sourceforge.net/>

Safari, OmniWeb and other Apple WebKit browsers also work with Big Medium, but do not support Big Medium's WYSIWYG editing features.

WYSIWYG Editing

Only certain browsers have the built-in functionality required to use Big Medium's rich-text editor, which offers WYSIWYG ("what you see is what you get") editing of your web page text. To use the rich-text editor, the Internet Explorer, Firefox, Netscape and Camino browsers are recommended. (Sorry, Mac users, Safari doesn't support WYSIWYG editing; Firefox or Camino are recommended instead.)

Cookies

Big Medium also requires cookies. If cookies are not enabled in your browser, Big Medium will repeatedly ask you to sign in. If this happens, check your browser's preferences to make sure cookies are enabled.

Your public website

The HTML markup generated by Big Medium for your public site is compatible with all browser versions. Pages created by Big Medium will work with any browsers for which your page templates are designed. Many of the page templates that ship with Big Medium, however, use design techniques that display correctly only in browsers that understand cascading style sheets. In practice, this means Internet Explorer 5+, Firefox, Netscape 6+, Safari, or Opera version 5+. You may, however, design your own custom templates to be compatible with any and all web browsers.

Installation Checklist

Before installing Big Medium, make sure you have all of the following files and programs:

- A copy of the Big Medium zip file. The Global Moxie site provides two versions, one for Unix-based servers like Linux, Solaris or OSX, and one for Windows servers.
- An FTP program such as WS_FTP or CuteFTP (for Windows) or Transmit or Interarchy (for Mac)

Also, make sure that you have the following server and website information in hand (your hosting service can supply this information if you do not know it):

- The path to Perl for your server. On Unix-based servers, the Perl path is typically `/usr/bin/perl`. For Windows, the Perl path is typically `C:\perl\bin\perl.exe`.
- If your server is on Linux or another Unix-based system, the path to `sendmail` for your server.
- If your server is on a Windows system, the name of a SMTP e-mail server that will accept mail from your domain.
- The directory path for your site's web directory (where your web pages are stored).
- The directory path for your site's CGI directory, often named `cgi-bin` or `cgi`.

Upgrading from Big Medium 1.x

To upgrade from Big Medium 1.x, you'll install Big Medium 2 alongside the previous version and, after the installation is complete, import your v1 sites into Big Medium 2 (for details on the installation process, see [Appendix E: Importing Sites from Big Medium 1.x](#)).

When you install Big Medium 2, be sure that you do not overwrite the `badmin`, `moxiebin` or `moxiedata` directories from your existing Big Medium 1.x installation. To be safe, change the names of these three directories from your Big Medium download package:

- Change `moxiedata` to `moxiedata2`
- Change `badmin` to `badmin2`
- Change `moxiebin` to `moxiebin2`

Going forward, when the installation instructions refer to `moxiedata`, `badmin` or `moxiebin`, use the new “2” version of each directory instead.

Preparing the Big Medium files

If you have not already unzipped the Big Medium zip file, go ahead and do that now. Depending on your server configuration, you may need to make a minor change to the 25 files ending in “.cgi” in the `moxiebin` directory. The next two sections describe the necessary changes for Unix and Windows servers, respectively. The relevant files in the `moxiebin` directory are:

- `bm-account.cgi`
- `bm-build.cgi`
- `bm-comment.cgi`
- `bm-config.cgi`
- `bm-css.cgi`
- `bm-editor.cgi`
- `bm-email.cgi`
- `bm-help.cgi`
- `bm-import.cgi`
- `bm-library.cgi`
- `bm-login.cgi`
- `bm-maint.cgi`
- `bm-mod.cgi`
- `bm-plugins.cgi`

- `bm-prefs.cgi`
- `bm-reset.cgi`
- `bm-review.cgi`
- `bm-search.cgi`
- `bm-sections.cgi`
- `bm-siteconfig.cgi`
- `bm-start.cgi`
- `bm-templates.cgi`
- `bm-themes.cgi`
- `bm-update.cgi`
- `ping.cgi`

Preparation for Unix-based servers

The files in the download package for Unix-based servers are configured by default to run on servers whose Perl path is `/usr/bin/perl`, which is by far the most common configuration. If this is the Perl path for your server, you can skip ahead to the next step, About File Permissions.

If your Perl path is *not* `/usr/bin/perl` then you have to update 25 of Big Medium's files with the correct path for your server. Among the unzipped files in your Big Medium download is a directory named `moxiebin`. This directory holds the Perl scripts for Big Medium. Using Notepad, BBEdit or another text editor, open each of the files ending with `".cgi"` and make sure that the top line of each of these `.cgi` files matches your server's Perl path.

For example, if your server's Perl path is `/usr/local/bin/perl`, the top line of each `.cgi` file should be:

```
#!/usr/local/bin/perl
```

Preparation for Windows servers

The files in the download package for Windows servers are configured to run on servers whose Perl path is `C:\perl\bin\perl.exe`, a very common configuration. If this is the Perl path for your server, you can skip ahead to the next step, About File Permissions.

If your Perl path is *not* `C:\perl\bin\perl.exe` then you have to update 25 of Big Medium's files with the correct path for your server. Among the unzipped files in your Big Medium download is a directory named `moxiebin`. This directory holds the Perl scripts for Big Medium. Using Notepad, BBEdit or another text editor, open each of the files ending with `".cgi"` and make sure that the top line of each of these `.cgi` files matches your server's Perl path.

For example, if your server's Perl path is `D:\perl\bin\perl.exe`, the top line of each `.cgi` file should be:

```
#!D:\perl\bin\perl.exe
```

About File Permissions

Big Medium requires that certain files and directories have specific permissions in order to work properly. The specific method for establishing these permissions depends on whether your web server is Unix-based (Linux, Mac OSX, Sun Solaris, etc) or Windows-based.

Permissions on Unix

The `chmod` command is used to set file permissions in Unix systems. Throughout the installation instructions, you will see instructions for setting `chmod` on various files and directories, followed by the notation “(Unix only).”

Most servers allow you to send `chmod` commands using your FTP program. For specific instructions, please consult your FTP program’s instructions.

Permissions on Windows

In most hosted Windows server environments, file and directory permissions will already be set correctly, and you can ignore the instructions about setting `chmod` in the installation instructions that follow (those sections are all marked “Unix only”).

However, if Big Medium encounters a problem with permissions, you will see a message asking you to correct those file settings. Only an authorized system administrator can update permissions for the necessary directories.

Specifically, the Internet Guest User requires permission to read, write, execute and modify (all permissions except “full control”) for the `moxiebin` directory. The Internet Guest User also requires read, write, and modify privileges for the site’s public html directory, the `bmadmin` directory and the `moxiedata` directory. (You’re about to upload the `moxiebin`, `bmadmin` and `moxiedata` directories as part of this installation.)

Upload the Files to the Server

Upload the `moxiebin` directory



Caution

If you’re updating from a previous version of Big Medium 2, be careful not to delete the file named `bm-setup.pl` in your server’s `moxiebin` directory when you upload the new `moxiebin` directory.

Open your FTP program, and connect to your server.

Set the program to upload files in “ASCII” mode or “Plain Text” mode (see your FTP program’s help files or instructions for help if you’re not sure how to do this).

Find your server's CGI directory, usually named `cgi` or `cgi-bin`. If you cannot find this directory, check with your hosting company to find out where you should install CGI scripts on your server.

Upload the `moxiebin` directory and all of its contents to your CGI directory. You should now have a directory named `moxiebin` inside your server's CGI directory, and the `moxiebin` directory should in turn contain 25 `.cgi` files, plus two directories: `Modules` and `plugins`. (If you are upgrading from a previous version of Big Medium 2, you will also have a file named `bm-setup.pl`).

Set permissions on these files and directories to `chmod 755` (Unix only). If you are upgrading from a previous version of Big Medium 2, do not change permissions on the `bm-setup.pl` file. (If you accidentally change the permissions on `bm-setup.pl`, you can change them back by setting them to `chmod 600`).

The permissions on the `moxiebin` directory itself should also be set to `chmod 755` (Unix only).

Upload the `moxiedata` directory



Caution

If you're updating from a previous version of Big Medium 2, be careful not to delete any existing directories in your server's `moxiedata` directory when you upload the new files. You can add or update files to existing directories, just be sure not to delete them. Do not make any changes at all to the `counters`, `data`, `search`, `templates_custom` or `user_data` directories.

Switch your FTP program to “Automatic” mode if it has one, otherwise to “Binary” or “Raw Data” mode. The remaining file uploads for your Big Medium installation will be done in this mode.

If possible, you should upload the `moxiedata` directory to a location outside of your CGI directory and above the web root of your server.



What is the web root?

The web root is the directory where your webpages are stored. Placing the `moxiedata` directory “above” the web root means that Big Medium's data files will not be accessible via web browser. For example, if your web root is:

```
/home/mywebsite/public_html
```

...you should upload `moxiedata` to the directory “above” `public_html` in the `/home/mywebsite` directory:

```
/home/mywebsite/moxiedata
```

If you do not have access to the directory above your web root, you have two additional options:

1. Locate the `moxiedata` directory in your CGI directory.
2. Locate the `moxiedata` directory in a browser-accessible location, but be sure that it is password-protected. Your hosting company may provide a control panel that lets you password-protect directories, or if your server supports `.htaccess` files, you can [password-protect the `moxiedata` directory manually](#)⁵.

After you have selected the location of your `moxiedata` directory, upload it to the server.

Unix permissions for the `moxiedata` directory

If you have an account with a web hosting service, then the web-server account is probably the same as the account that you use to upload files to the server; in that case, set permissions on the `moxiedata` directory to `chmod 700`.

If Big Medium later complains that it does not have permission to access the `moxiedata` directory, try setting permissions on the account to `chmod 770` or, if Big Medium continues to have trouble with the `moxiedata` directory, try `chmod 777`.

Windows permissions for the `moxiedata` directory

The Internet Guest User requires permission to read, write, execute and modify (all permissions except “full control”) for the `moxiedata` directory.

Upload the `badmin` directory



Caution

If you're updating from a previous version of Big Medium 2, be careful not to delete or replace the `badmin/themes/_custom` directory (if it exists). If you have saved any custom themes to your theme library, those themes are stored in that directory. **Deleting that directory would also delete your saved themes.**

Upload the `badmin` directory and all of its contents to the directory where you store your webpages. This directory should be located somewhere outside of the CGI directory and below the web-root directory so that it is accessible via web browser, at a location like:

`http://www.example.com/badmin/`

Unix permissions for the `badmin` directory

Set permissions on the `badmin` directory (and all files and directories inside) to `chmod 755`.

If Big Medium later complains that it does not have permission to access the `badmin` directory, try setting permissions on the account to `chmod 775` or, if Big Medium continues to have permission problems with the `badmin` directory, try `chmod 777`.

⁵ <http://beta.bigmedium.com/help/faq/display/require-password.shtml>

Windows permissions for the `bmadmin` directory

The Internet Guest User requires permission to read, write, execute and modify (all permissions except “full control”) for the `bmadmin` directory.

Update `index.html`

Inside the `bmadmin` directory, locate the file named `index.html`. In a text editor like Notepad or BBEdit, open the `index.html` file in the `bmadmin` directory on your local hard drive. You must update two URLs in this file to reflect locations on your web server. The first is marked with this comment in the file:

```
*****  
UPDATE THE “ACTION” URL TO POINT TO THE DOMAIN WHERE BIG MEDIUM IS  
INSTALLED. FOR EXAMPLE:  
http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-login.cgi/login-verify  
*****
```

...and again:

```
*****  
UPDATE THE “HREF” URL TO POINT TO THE DOMAIN WHERE BIG MEDIUM IS  
INSTALLED. FOR EXAMPLE:  
http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-login.cgi/login-reminder  
*****
```

Set Permissions on the HTML Directory

Big Medium needs permission to read and write files in your site’s public HTML directory, which is where your site’s homepage file is located, for example. To enable this, please be sure that the web-server user account has full access to this directory.

On Unix-based servers

If you have an account with a web hosting service, then it’s likely that no change is required. However, if Big Medium later complains that it does not have permission to read or write files in the public HTML directory, try setting permissions on the directory to `chmod 755`. If you continue to receive an error, try setting permissions to `chmod 775`. And finally, if you continue to receive error messages, try `chmod 777`.

For Windows servers

The Internet Guest User requires permission to read, write, execute and modify (all permissions except “full control”) for the site’s public html directory.

Run the Updater Script

This step is necessary only if you are upgrading from a previous version of Big Medium 2; if you are installing a fresh copy of Big Medium 2, please jump ahead to the “Set up the Maintenance Script” section.

The updater script makes all of the necessary behind-the-scenes changes to bring your upgraded installation

up to speed. When necessary, it also updates the public site(s) managed by Big Medium so that your visitors can immediately enjoy any new features. Until you run the updater, Big Medium will present a “Temporarily Unavailable” message whenever you try to access the Big Medium control panel.

To run the updater, browse to `bm-update.cgi` in your server’s `moxiebin` directory. To do this, go to the following location (updating the URL to reflect the location of the `moxiebin` directory on your server):

```
http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-update.cgi
```

Your upgrade is complete. Congrats, you’re done! You can stop here and go enjoy the smell of freshly upgraded software.

Set up the Maintenance Script

Big Medium has a script that runs regular maintenance tasks, including search indexing and the scheduled publication/removal of site content. This maintenance script should be run every few minutes (15 minutes is a good period for most sites) to ensure that all background tasks are being handled in a timely fashion.

If the maintenance script is not run regularly, a message will be displayed to Big Medium administrators when they sign into the control panel to alert them to the problem.

Your web server can be configured to run this maintenance script at regular intervals, and most web hosting plans offer access to the necessary tools to schedule this task. This is the preferred method to use, but if you’re not provided access to these tools, you can use an external service (such as that provided by [webcron.org](http://www.webcron.org)⁶) to run the script for you.

However you do it, the goal is to trigger this URL every 15 minutes (updating it, of course, to point to the `moxiebin` directory on your server):

```
http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

Maintenance setup on a Unix-based server

Unix servers have a service named “cron” to schedule tasks, which are commonly called “cron jobs.” Most web hosting plans offer a control panel for managing the server, and this frequently includes an option for scheduling cron jobs. If your hosting company does not provide a control-panel interface for this, then you will need command-line access (telnet or SSH) to your server to add the scheduled task, or your web hosting company may be able to set it up on your behalf.

Unix option one: Add the task from the control panel

The interface for the cron job control panel will vary according to the software used by your hosting company. If you need help, check with your host’s tech support team.

All cron job panels, however, will allow you to schedule a Unix command to run at various intervals. You should schedule the job to run every 15 minutes. The specific command to use depends on the tools installed on your server. If you’re not sure, your hosting company can tell you which command your server supports.

⁶ <http://www.webcron.org/>

Whichever of the following commands you choose, update the `http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin` portion of the URL with the correct URL to the moxiebin directory on your server.

If your server supports the `curl` command (the “-o” below is the lowercase letter “oh”):

```
curl -s -o /dev/null http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

If your server supports the `fetch` command (the “-o” below is the lowercase letter “oh”):

```
fetch -o /dev/null http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

If your server supports `lynx`:

```
lynx > /dev/null -dump http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

If your server supports `wget` (the “-O” below is the uppercase letter “oh”):

```
wget -q -O /dev/null http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

Unix option two: Add the task from the command line

If you have shell access to your server, you can add the task using the Unix `crontab` command.

Sign into your server using `telnet` or `ssh` and use the following command to export your existing scheduled tasks to a text file:

```
crontab -l > cron.txt
```

Open the `cron.txt` file in a text editor. You will add the new cron job command to this file.



Which command to use?

The exact command depends on the software tools installed on your server. Type the name of each of the following tools on the command line one at a time until you do not get a `command not found` message: `curl`, `fetch`, `lynx` and `wget`. If you do not get a `command not found` message, that tool is supported on your server.

After choosing your tool, add one of the following lines to the bottom of the `cron.txt` file, replacing the `http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin` portion of the URL with the correct URL to the moxiebin directory on your server:

If your server supports the `curl` command (the “-o” below is the lowercase letter “oh”):

```
*/15 * * * * curl -s -o /dev/null http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

If your server supports the `fetch` command (the “-o” below is the lowercase letter “oh”):

```
*/15 * * * * fetch -o /dev/null http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

If your server supports lynx:

```
* /15 * * * * lynx > /dev/null -dump http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

If your server supports wget (the “-O” below is the uppercase letter “oh”):

```
* /15 * * * * wget -q -O /dev/null http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

After updating and saving the cron.txt file, type the following command on the command line:

```
crontab cron.txt
```

Maintenance setup on a Windows server

Download and install wget

Wget is a tool that allows your server to retrieve web files, and we will use it to run the Big Medium maintenance script for you. You can grab a copy of wget for Windows from the wget website:

<http://www.gnu.org/software/wget/>. After you have downloaded and unzipped the zip file, copy the wget.exe file along with any .dll files directly inside the directory where Windows is installed on your server. For example, typical locations include:

```
c:\windows\wget.exe  
c:\winnt\wget.exe
```

Create a batch file

In a text editor like Notepad, create a new file with the following line, replacing the http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin portion of the URL with the correct URL to the moxiebin directory on your server (that’s the capital letter “oh” in `wget -q -O` below):

```
wget -q -O /dev/null http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

Save the file as bigmedium.bat. You may save the file anywhere you like on the server, but it’s strongly recommended that you keep it in a location that won’t change and is not accessible to the web server (in other words, don’t save the file in the same directory as your HTML files on the server).

Create the scheduled task

Your server’s tasks are stored in the “Scheduled Tasks” directory in the server’s “Control Panel” directory. Go to the “Scheduled Tasks” directory and click on “Add Scheduled Task.” The task wizard will launch.

After clicking Next, it will ask for the program to run. Click “Browse…” and select the bigmedium.bat batch file that you created.

Give the Scheduled Task a name (e.g., “Big Medium Maintenance”) and select to perform this task daily. Click Next.

Set the Start time to 0:00 and choose to perform this task every day. Click Next.

Supply your user name and password, and click Next.

Check the “Open advanced properties for this task when I click Finish” option, and click “Finish.”

Click the “Schedule” tab and then the “Advanced...” button. Check the “Repeat task” option and set the task to run every 15 minutes. Beside “Until,” check the Time option and enter the value 23:59. Click OK. Click Apply to save all settings.

Maintenance setup using an external service

If you do not have access to the necessary tools to schedule the maintenance script using the methods described above, you can use an external service to run the script on a regular basis.

This is not as reliable as the other methods, however, and relies on the uptime of the external service. Use this method only as a fallback if you’re unable to schedule your server to run the job.

There are a variety of free and paid services that will visit web pages for you on a fixed schedule. One such service is [webcron.org](http://www.webcron.org)⁷ (this is not an endorsement of the service, only a pointer to one of many). After selecting your external service, follow the service’s directions for setting up your scheduled task. The service should request the following URL every 15 minutes (with the URL updated, of course, to point to the `bm-maint.cgi` script in your server’s `moxiebin` directory):

```
http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-maint.cgi
```

The Big Medium Setup Wizard

Whew, congratulations, the hardest part is over! The rest of your Big Medium installation takes place in a friendlier environment: your web browser.

To start the Big Medium setup wizard, go to this location in your browser, adjusting the URL as necessary to point to the `moxiebin/bm-start.cgi` file on your server:

```
http://www.example.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm-start.cgi
```

Step one: About you

Provide your organization name and administrator e-mail address in the requested field and click “Onward.”

Step two: Server information

This page asks for several directory paths and URLs to help Big Medium get its bearings on the server. Use the help links for detailed info and suggestions about the locations of these directories and URLs.

⁷ <http://www.webcron.org/>

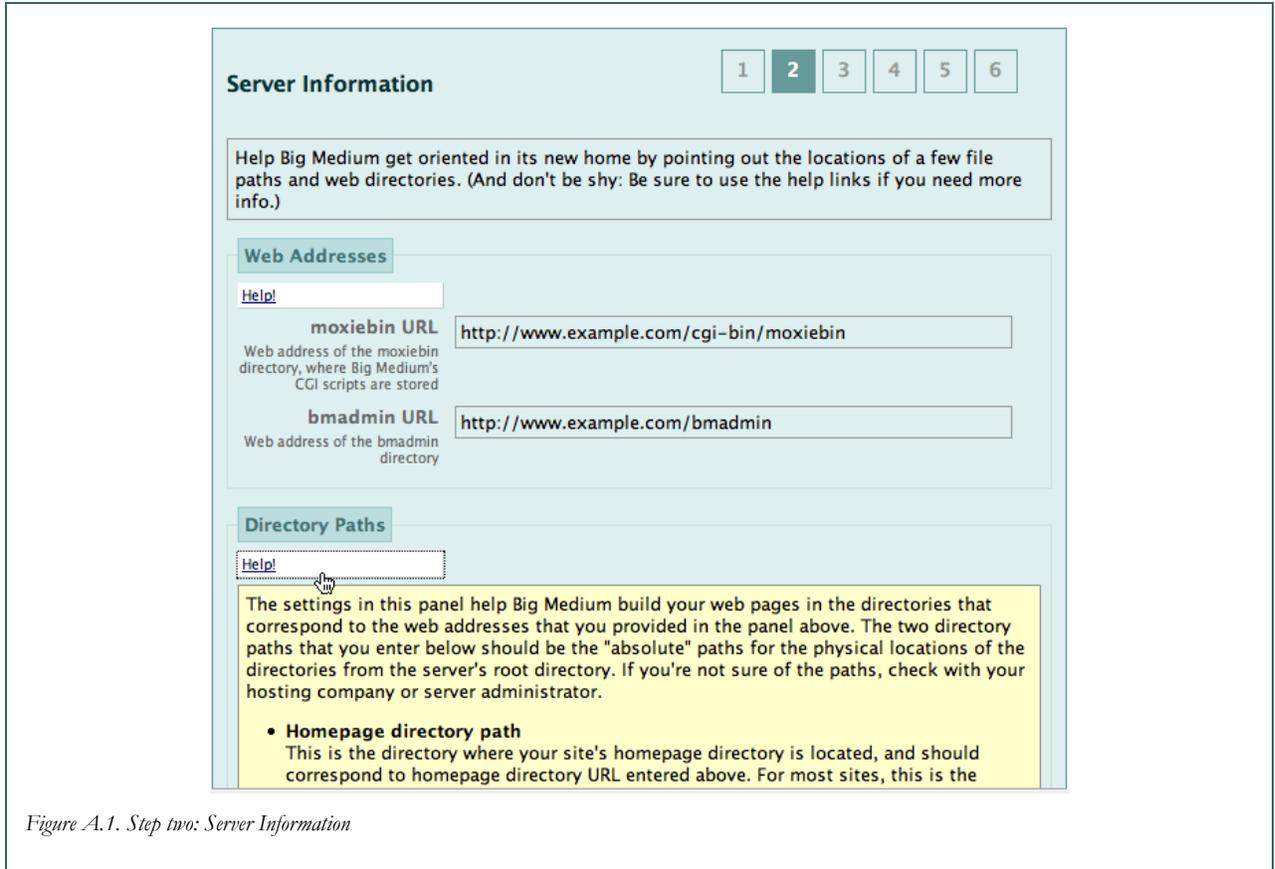


Figure A.1. Step two: Server Information



Important

If you are installing on the same server where another Big Medium 1.x installation is already installed, you should have changed the names of the `bmadmin`, `moxiedata` and `moxiebin` directories. Don't forget to use those changed names (e.g. `bmadmin2`, `moxiedata2` and `moxiebin2`) when entering them into the form.

Firewall settings

The "Firewall" panel on this screen allows you to enter proxy server information. If you rent a web server from a standard hosting service, you almost certainly do not have a proxy server, and you can leave these fields as-is; move along, nothing to see here.

However, if your web server is part of a private network, it may use a proxy server to connect out to the Internet. Check with your server administrator if you're not sure. (You can also leave this field as-is for now and fill it in later via the "Settings>Big Medium Server Info" screen in the control panel after running the setup wizard.)

Akismet anti-spam service

Big Medium offers the option to use the Akismet online service to check visitor comments for spam and, if they're spammy, prevent them from being posted to your pages. If you plan to enable visitor comments on your site(s), this feature is highly recommended.

In order to enable Akismet, you need to enter your 12-digit Akismet key in this field. For information about Akismet and obtaining a key, see [Appendix B: Spam Prevention with Akismet](#).

If you don't want to use Akismet, or if you're not sure, you can leave this field blank. (You can always supply the key later via the "Settings>Big Medium Server Info" screen in the control panel after running the setup wizard.)

Step three: Your administrator account

Enter the user name, e-mail address and password information for your Big Medium administrator account, then click "Onward."

Big medium

About you Server info **Your account** Site info Site sections Site theme

Your Administrator Account

Create an administrator account for this installation of Big Medium. (You'll have the opportunity later to create additional accounts if you like, including additional administrator accounts).

Personal Info

◆ User Name admin
The name used to sign into Big Medium

◆ E-Mail admin@acme.com
E-mail address of the account owner

Password

◆ Password *****

◆ Confirm Password *****

Send Greeting? Send welcome e-mail to the address above, providing login instructions along with the user name and password.
CAUTION: This e-mail will be sent in clear text over the public internet.

Onward >>

Figure A.2. Step three: Your administrator account

Step four: Your First Site

This page asks for the name, URLs and directories for your first site. The help links offer detailed help and suggestions for choosing these directories, but briefly...

The homepage directory

The path and URL of the directory where you would like Big Medium to build and store the homepage for this site. In most cases, this is the web root directory of your site. For example:

`http://www.example.com`

However, if you already have an existing site, you may want to set this to a temporary directory so that your new site does not interfere with your current site until it's ready to go. For example:

`http://www.example.com/bm`

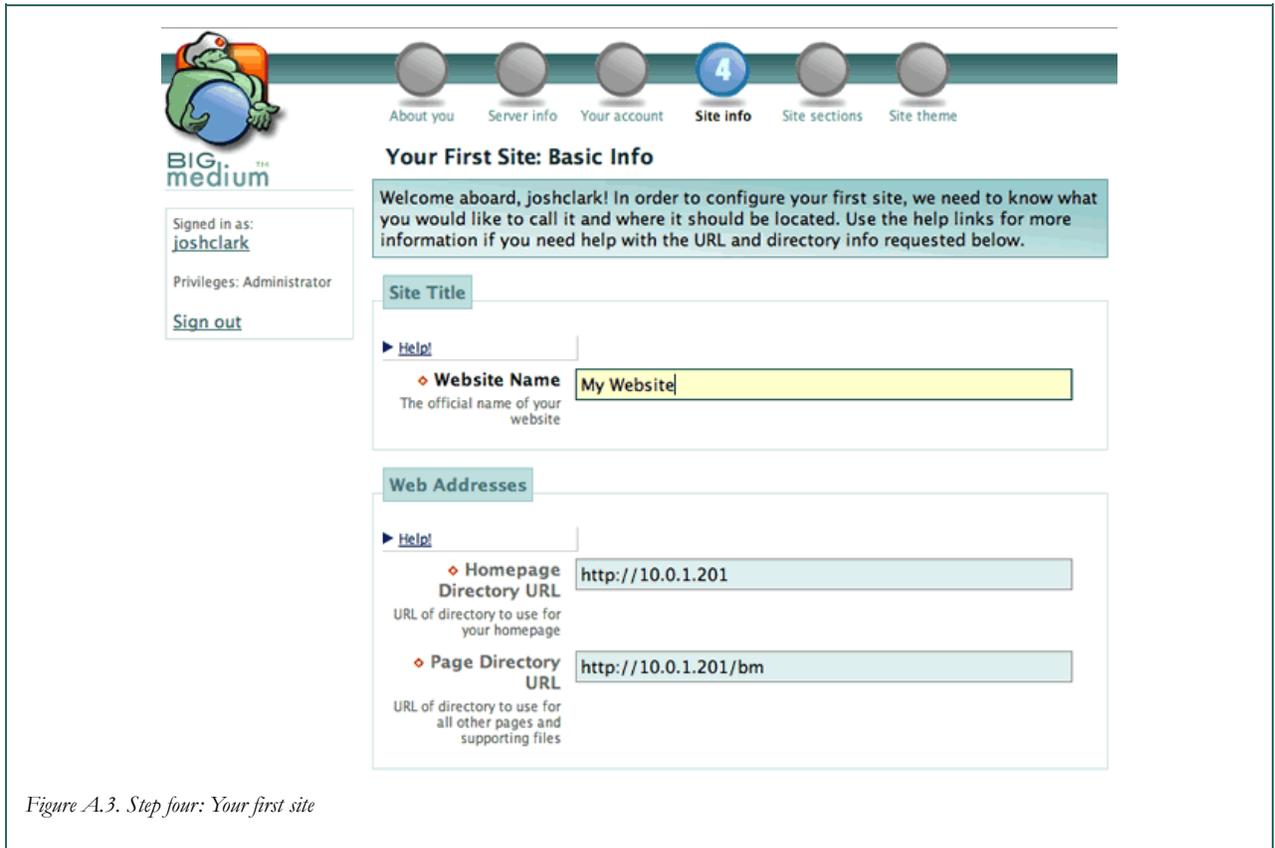


Figure A.3. Step four: Your first site

The page directory

The path and URL of the directory where you would like Big Medium to build and store all of the non-homepage files and pages for your site.

After choosing the name, URLs, directories and time zone for your new site, click “Onward.”

You’ll be asked to confirm that you can see two images. If you can, this indicates that you have filled in the correct values for your site directories and URLs. If not, you need to try again. Click the “Yes” link if you see the image, or click “No” if not.

Step five: Create content sections and categories

Your site will consist of the homepage and one or more content categories, or “sections.” Sections are the organizational tools that you use to categorize content on your website, and the primary navigational

method that your visitors will use to move about the site.

Sections can be one-pagers (like a “Contact Us” page), but more commonly they’re containers for lots of web pages (like “News,” “Business” or “Sports” sections in a newspaper website). This page lets you define the sections of your site.



Figure A.4. Step five: Create content sections and categories

To add a new section, click the “Add main section” link and give the section a title and a “slug name.”



What’s a slug name?

The slug name is a kind of internal nickname for the section and also determines the name of the directory where the section’s pages will be found. For example, a section with the slug name “news” might have its pages in the directory: <http://www.example.com/bm/news> ...and if you have a “Local News” subsection of this news section, with a slug name of “local,” that subsection’s pages would be located here: <http://www.example.com/bm/news/local>

To add subsections to your new section, click the section name and then “Add subsection” and fill out the form with the title and slug name of the new subsection. When you have created your sections -- or at least enough to get started -- click “Onward.”

Step six: Choose a design theme

“Themes” determine the look and feel of your site. Select a design theme by clicking “Apply” next to the theme that you want (or “details” to see a preview). Never fear, you won’t be locked in. You can choose another theme later, customize this theme, or create your own design from scratch. For now, choose a theme to get started.

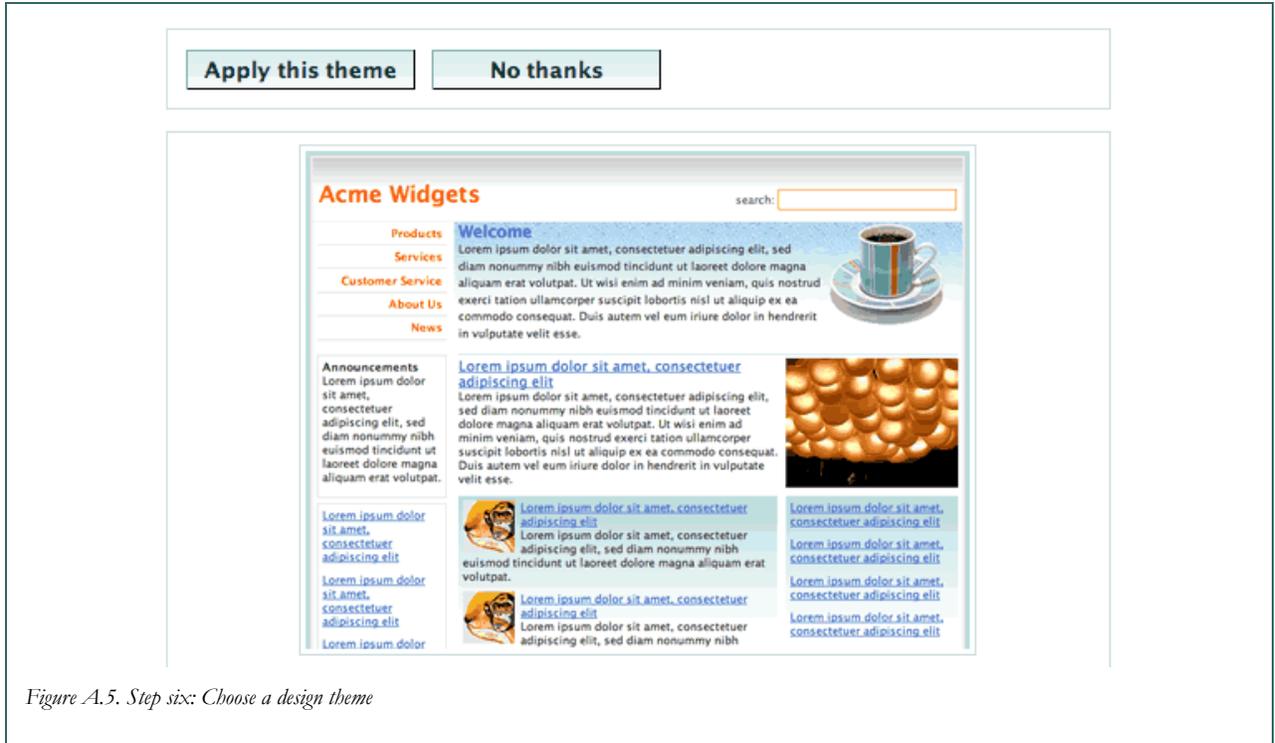


Figure A.5. Step six: Choose a design theme

Congratulations, you're done!

Your site is now ready for editing. You can get started right away by clicking the “Welcome to [site name]” link in the edit menu and editing the text on the home page. Or click “New Article Page” to create a new page in one of your site sections.

Or, if you are upgrading from Big Medium v1, you're now ready to import your sites into Big Medium 2. See [Appendix E: Importing Sites from Big Medium 1.x](#) for details.

Registering Big Medium

Big Medium is free to use for the first 30 days. During this time, you can enjoy the software's full functionality without spending a dime. After the 30-day trial period, Big Medium's administrative interface will stop working until you purchase a license and register the installation with your license code.

To purchase a license, visit: <http://globalmoxie.com/buy/>

Entering your registration code

Sign into Big Medium with an administrator account. If the 30-demo period has expired, follow the instructions to register your account. Otherwise, go to “Settings>Register Big Medium,” and follow the instructions there.

Spam Prevention with Akismet

What's more disheartening than having spammers vandalize your site with scrawled comments about Viagra, ringtones and dark visions of Paris Hilton? To help prevent such comments from seeing the light of day, Big Medium offers the option to use the [Akismet anti-spam service](#)¹ to screen comments for spam.

The brainchild of Wordpress phenom [Matt Mullenweg](#)², Akismet is an online service that torture-tests comments with hundreds of tests and then tells Big Medium whether or not it's spam. If a comment has the scent of processed ham, Big Medium chucks it into the spam bin instead of posting it to the site. Spam comments are deleted automatically every 15 days.

If a good comment is incorrectly identified as spam (a "false positive"), never fear. Accounts with publisher privileges or better can review spam comments, approving the good comments. This also triggers Big Medium to notify Akismet about the mistake, helping to improve Akismet's filtering in the future.

Likewise, if a spam comment manages to escape detection, you can mark the comment as spam, and Big Medium will remove it from the site and inform Akismet about the spam message.

Your Akismet API key

In order to enable Big Medium to communicate with the Akismet service, you have to sign up for an Akismet "key." This key is a special identifier, like an account name.

¹ <http://akismet.com/>

² <http://photomatt.net/>

Akismet keys are free for personal sites and have a modest licensing fee for commercial sites. The key is used for all sites managed by your installation of Big Medium; if you use Big Medium to host one or more commercial sites, you should purchase a commercial license. For information about obtaining your Akismet key and licensing options, please visit the Akismet site:

<http://akismet.com/commercial/>

Configuring Big Medium for Akismet

To make Big Medium Akismet-ready, you simply need to give it your 12-digit Akismet key. You have the option to do this when you're first setting up Big Medium, in the second screen of the setup wizard, or administrators can add the comment in the "Settings>Big Medium Server Info" screen after Big Medium has already been configured.

After supplying your key, Big Medium will, by default, submit new comments from all sites to Akismet. You can disable Akismet service for an individual site in the "Visitor Comments" screen of the site's HTML preferences.

Editing Text with the Rich-Text Editor

The rich-text editor is a WYSIWYG (“what you see is what you get”) editor for text entry. The editor provides a toolbar of familiar text-formatting buttons, giving you a workspace similar to a word processor for entering and formatting your text.

Browser requirements

The rich-text editor requires Internet Explorer 6+ (Windows only) or a Mozilla-based browser (Windows, Mac OSX or Linux) including Firefox 1.0, Camino 1.0+ or Netscape 7.1+.

If you do not have one of these browsers, the rich-text toolbar will not be displayed, but you can instead use Markdown (see [Appendix D: Editing Text with Markdown](#)) to add formatting to your text.

Spell-checking in Firefox

As with other text fields in the Firefox browser, Big Medium's rich-text editor highlights misspelled words by underlining them in red. Viewing and accepting the spelling suggestions, however, works slightly differently here.

In normal editing fields, you can get Firefox's spelling suggestions by right-clicking the word (CTRL-clicking in Mac). In the rich-text editor, however, right-clicking gets you editor-specific options. To see the spelling suggestions, you instead have to use CTRL-right-click (for Mac, command-CTRL-click).

Paragraph formatting



Figure C.1. Paragraph format menu

Select the paragraphs to format, and select the appropriate paragraph or heading style from the dropdown menu.

Style formatting



Figure C.2. Style toolbar buttons: Bold, italic, underline and strike-through

Select the text to format, and click the appropriate style button to change the text's style to **bold**, *italic*, underline or ~~strike-through~~. These buttons toggle the style formatting on and off, so if the text is already formatted in the style you select, that style formatting will be removed.

Superscript and subscript



Figure C.3. Superscript and subscript toolbar buttons

Select the text to format, and click the appropriate button to change the text to superscript or subscript.

Special characters

The special-character toolbar button triggers a pop-up window to allow you to select and insert a variety of different symbols and accent characters, including copyright ©, trademark ™, registered ®, quarter ¼, half ½ and three-quarters ¾ characters.

To insert a character, click the cursor in your text where you want to do the insert, then click the special-character button. Click the relevant character, and the editor will insert it into the text at the point

you indicated.



Figure C.4. Special-character toolbar button

Links and anchors



Figure C.5. Link and anchor buttons: Link, unlink and anchor

To insert a link, highlight the text to use as link text and click the link button (the globe with the chain link). In the resulting pop-up window, select the type of link to create:

- **URL.** This is a link to another page. Select the protocol to use (use `http://` if you're not sure what this means) and enter the web address in the URL field.
- **Anchor in this page.** This is a link to another location in the same page. Enter the name of the anchor to which you would like to link (see below for info on creating and naming anchors).
- **Email.** This is a link that will open a new email message in your visitor's email client. You can specify the address, subject and message text for the email.

To update a link, click anywhere in the link and click again on the link button. Update the link information in the pop-up window.

To remove a link, click anywhere in the link and click the unlink button in the toolbar (the globe with the broken chain link).

To add a link *anchor* that will allow you to link to that location on the page, click in the text where you would like to place the anchor and then click the anchor toolbar button. In the pop-up window, enter the name that you would like to use for the anchor (you use this name when you create the “anchor in this page” link type described above).

Alignment



Figure C.6. Alignment buttons

Select the paragraph(s) to format and click the appropriate alignment button to align the text left, center or right.

Indentation



Figure C.7. Indentation buttons

Select the paragraph(s) to format and click the appropriate button to “outdent” or indent the left margin.

Lists



Figure C.8. List buttons

Select the text that you would like to change to a list and click the appropriate list button to turn the text into a numbered list or a bullet list. If the text is already a list, clicking the button takes the text out of list format.

Tables



Figure C.9. Table button

Click the cursor in the text where you would like to place the cursor and click the table button. In the pop-up window that appears, enter the properties for your table, including the number of rows and columns that you want your table to have.

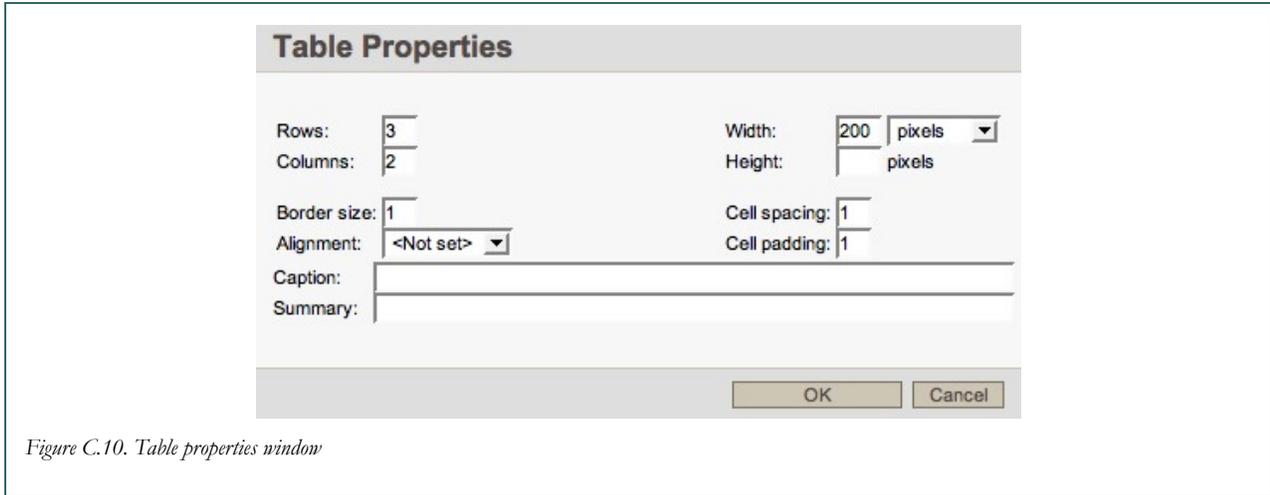


Figure C.10. Table properties window

After inserting the table into your text you can enter text into each table cell simply by clicking and typing into the cell. You can format the text of table cells as you would any other text using the toolbar buttons.

To make changes to the table, including adding new rows, columns or cell-specific characteristics, right-click in the table (control-click for Macs) and a pop-up menu will offer a variety of formatting options.

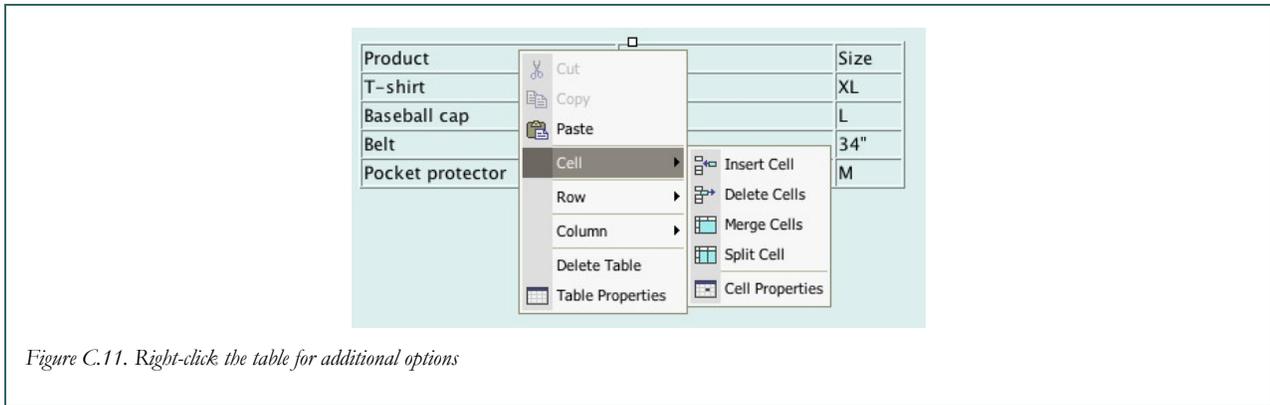


Figure C.11. Right-click the table for additional options

Find and Replace



Figure C.12. Find and replace buttons

Clicking the “find” button reveals a window with a text field. Enter the text to find. Clicking the “search” button brings up a similar window to enter the text to find as well as replacement text

Undo and Redo



Figure C.13. Undo and redo buttons

Clicking the “undo” button reverses the last formatting command or deletes the last text you typed. To restore the formatting or text after clicking “undo,” click the “redo” button.

Formatting tools

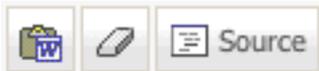


Figure C.14. Paste-from-Word, remove-formatting and view-source buttons

When you paste text from other applications into the rich-text editor, the formatting of that text often comes with it, including fonts and styles that may not match the design of your site. Big Medium does its best to correct these formatting differences behind the scenes when you save the page, but these three buttons give you additional tools to remove that formatting yourself.

Clicking the “paste from Word” button displays a pop-up window where you can paste your text and have Big Medium scrub it clean of formatting that’s inappropriate for your site. When using the Internet Explorer browser, Big Medium automatically detects when you’re pasting from Word and recommends that you use this tool to avoid formatting headaches.

Clicking the “remove format” button removes all font, style and structural formatting from the selected text, essentially converting it to plain text. This can be useful, for example, when text pasted from another source does not behave as expected; clicking the button allows you to start fresh with your own formatting.

The “source” button allows advanced users to directly view and edit the underlying HTML of the text. Clicking the button toggles the view between HTML and rich text.

Editing Text with Markdown

Markdown is an elegant syntax for formatting plain text for conversion into HTML. It's an intuitive format that uses conventions that have been kicking around since the early typewriter days for indicating lists, bold and italic text, headings and more. You probably already use some of this formatting when you write email, instant messages or other missives in simple text editors.

Markdown was created by a very bright guy named John Gruber whose website offers [comprehensive details](http://daringfireball.net/projects/markdown/syntax)¹ on getting the most out of the syntax, but here's a review of the basics.

Why use Markdown instead of the rich-text editor?

Neither is right or wrong. It's simply a matter of personal preference, of finding the text-entry tool that makes it easiest for you to craft your words.

Markdown fans like the way that its minimalist approach to text formatting lets you focus on your message without visual distractions. At the same time, it also gives power users more precise control over the display of the end result with the ability to mix HTML tags into your text. Markdown is particularly smart about this last point, recognizing the portions of the text for which it should automate HTML formatting, while leaving alone other portions where you're using your own HTML markup. This makes Markdown a good choice, for example, where you have pages that mix in forms, flash or other relatively sophisticated formatting that the WYSIWYG rich-text editor does not offer.

¹ <http://daringfireball.net/projects/markdown/syntax>

Paragraphs and line breaks

Paragraphs should be unindented and separated with a blank line:

```
This is a paragraph.
```

```
This is another paragraph.
```

```
Example D.1. Separate paragraphs with a blank line
```

Any time that you want a line break within a paragraph, you must end the line with two or more spaces and type return. If you omit the extra spaces, no line break will be inserted and the text will be treated as a single unbroken paragraph.

Bold and italic

Use underscores and asterisks to *_italicize_* and ****boldface**** words:

```
I want to make this text _italic_ and this text **bold**.
```

Lists

Create lists by using asterisks, pluses or hyphens as list markers:

```
* This is the first item in a bullet list.
```

```
* Second item.
```

```
* Third item.
```

```
+ This is also a bullet list.
```

```
+ Second item.
```

```
+ Third item
```

```
- And so is this.
```

```
- Second item.
```

```
- Third item.
```

```
Example D.2. Bullet lists
```

Create numbered lists with numbers followed by periods:

1. First item
2. Second item
3. Third item

Example D.3. Numbered list

Links

Put link text in brackets followed by the address in parentheses:

This is an [example link](http://www.example.com/).

To make a URL turn into a link, surround it with angle brackets like so:

<http://www.example.com>

...and the same for e-mail addresses:

<info@example.com>

Text headings

Add ### hash marks at the start of a paragraph to turn that paragraph into a text heading:

This is a heading

This is the body text that appears immediately below the heading.

This is another heading

And here's some more body text.

Example D.4. Text headings

Indentation and block quotes

Indent by “quoting” text as many e-mail programs do, using angle brackets at the start of each line.

```
> This is indented (blockquote) text.  
>  
> This is a second paragraph of blockquote text.  
>  
> This is a third paragraph.
```

Example D.5. Indented/blockquote text

You can create additional indentation within a block quote by “nesting” the > angle bracket:

```
> This is the first level of quoting.  
>  
> > This is an additional level of quoting.  
>  
> Back to the first level.
```

Example D.6. Nested blockquote

Horizontal rules

You can produce a horizontal line into your text by placing three or more hyphens on a line by themselves:

```
This text appears above the horizontal rule.  
---  
This text appears below.
```

Include your own HTML

If you know your way around HTML and want to do more formatting than Markdown’s syntax provides, you can include your own HTML inside Markdown text. If you want, you can even use HTML tags instead of Markdown formatting; *e.g.*, if you prefer to use HTML `<a>` or `` tags instead of Markdown’s link or image syntax, go right ahead. No need to do anything special, just add the markup:

```
Open a <a href="http://www.globalmoxie.com/" target="_blank">new window</a>.
```

“Block-level” HTML elements like `<div>`, `<table>`, `<pre>`, `<p>`, etc. must be separated from surrounding content by blank lines. For example, to add a table:

This is a regular paragraph.

```
<table>
  <tr>
    <td>Table text</td>
  </tr>
</table>
```

This is another regular paragraph.

Example D.7. Separate block-level HTML from other text by blank lines

The start and end tags of the enclosing block-level HTML tag of your custom HTML cannot be indented (indented code is displayed as raw code, as described in the next section).

Note that Markdown formatting syntax is not processed within block-level HTML tags. *E.g.*, you can't use Markdown-style `_emphasis_` inside an HTML block.

Writing about code or HTML

If you're writing about code or HTML and want the tags to appear as text instead of as the actual HTML tags, you can protect that text by wrapping it in backtick quotes:

I strongly recommend against using any `<blink>` tags.

To specify an entire block of pre-formatted code, indent every line of the block by 4 spaces or 1 tab:

This is regular text, but I want to give an example of pre-formatted code:

```
  <strong>
  This HTML will appear as-is because it is
  indented by four spaces.
  </strong>
```

And back to regular text.

Example D.8. Indent text to indicate a block of code

Importing Sites from Big Medium 1.x

Import legacy sites

Administrators can import accounts and sites from previous versions of Big Medium by selecting “Settings>Import Legacy Sites” in the control panel. The importer can import data only from v1.x installations on the same server. The accounts and sites are copied into Big Medium 2, leaving the original data from the v1.x installation untouched. This allows you to keep your original v1.x site running while you transition to your new v2 site.

Select the data location

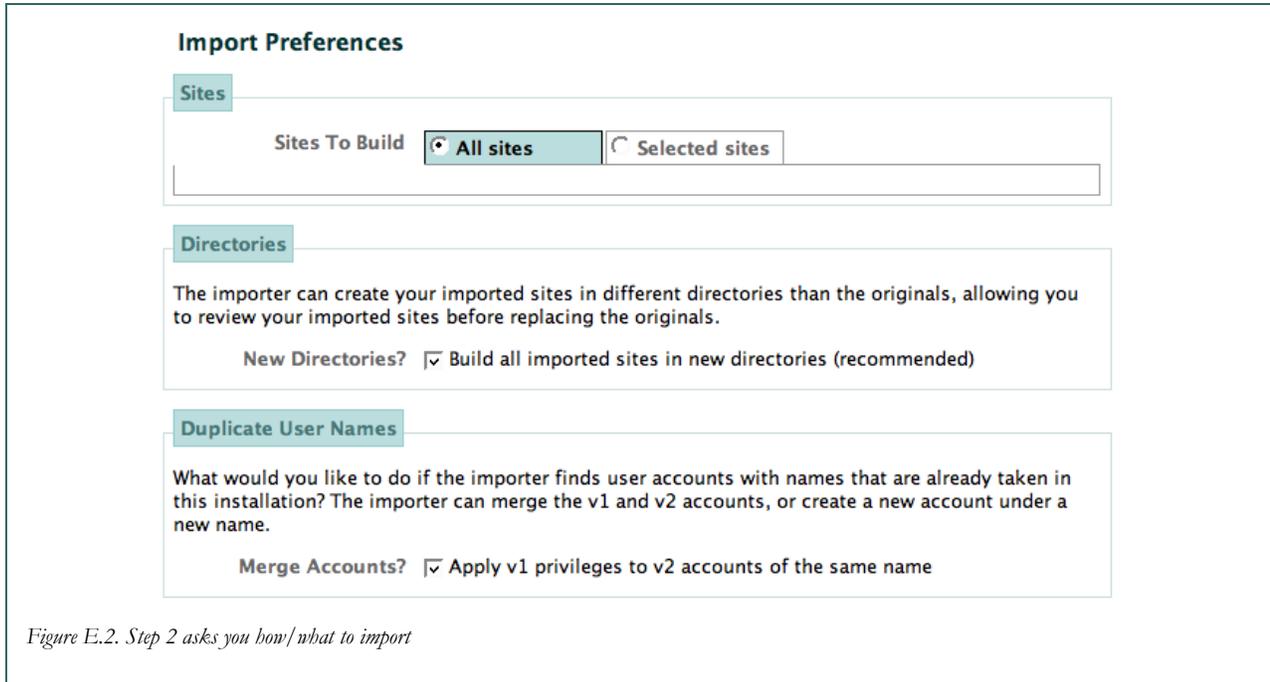


The screenshot shows the control panel interface with a navigation bar containing icons for New Page, Edit, Layout, Styles, Accounts, and Settings. The breadcrumb trail indicates the current location: Settings > Import Legacy Sites > Location of v1 data. The main heading is "Import Sites and Accounts". A message states: "To import sites and user accounts from a version 1.x installation of Big Medium on this server, please provide the directory path to the old moxiedata directory." Below this, the "Location of v1 data" section contains a "Data directory" label and a text input field with the path "/home/mysite/var/www/moxiedata". A "Continue" button is located at the bottom of the form.

Figure E.1. Provide the location of the old moxiedata directory

The first screen of the import process prompts you to supply the location of the original v1.x `moxiedata` directory. Enter the directory path and click Continue.

Importer preferences



The next screen asks you how and what you would like to import. Select your preferences and click continue.

Sites

Click the “All sites” tab to import all sites from the v1.x installation, or click the “Selected sites” tab to import only certain sites. (You can choose to import selected sites now and then import the rest later). Use CTRL-click (or Command-click on Mac) to select more than one site in the “Selected sites” tab.

Directories

The default (and recommended) setting is to create the imported sites in new HTML directories so that the public v1.x site remains untouched. Later, when you’re ready to take your new Big Medium v2 site live, you can move the HTML directory to replace the old v1 site.

If you prefer to have Big Medium import the v2 site into the same directory and immediately replace the v1 site files, uncheck the “Build all imported sites in new directories” option.

Duplicate user names

You’ve already created at least one administrator account in your v2 installation, and perhaps others, too. The importer needs to know what to do if it runs into accounts with the same user names from the v1 installation.

The default handling of duplicate user names is to assume that both v1 and v2 accounts refer to the same

person. The privileges for v1 accounts and sites are extended to v2 accounts of the same name, “merging” the privileges of the two installations.

Unchecking the “Apply v1 privileges to v2 accounts of the same name” option instead tells Big Medium to create new accounts under a new name when it encounters a user name that already exists. For example, when Big Medium imports an account named “mary,” and an account already exists for “mary,” it will import the v1 account as “mary-2.”

“Importing Data...” progress

The next screen does the actual data import. If you’re running Big Medium on a Unix-based server, a progress bar will show you where you are in the process. Sites with hundreds or thousands of pages may take a couple of minutes to import.

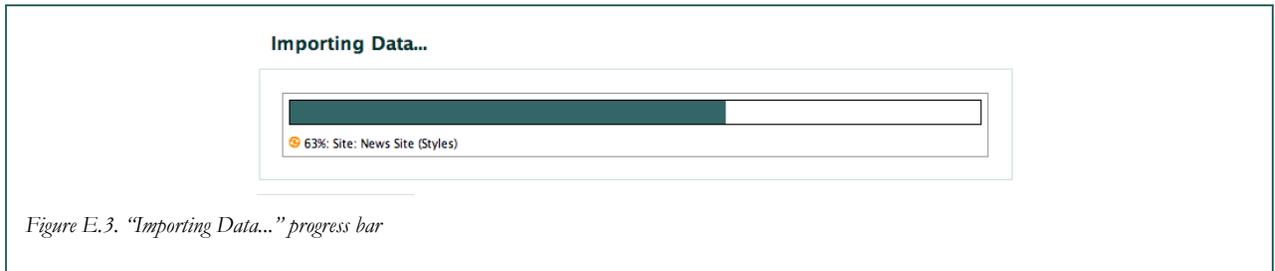


Figure E.3. “Importing Data...” progress bar

The progress bar will show “DONE” when the import is complete.

Where are the imported sites?

To edit your imported sites, sign into Big Medium as usual. Click the “Switch sites” link in the left column to select the site to edit. From there, you can visit the public site by clicking the site’s name under “Now editing” in the left column.

The location of the public site depends on the “Directories” preference that you chose before importing.

If you chose the default “Build all imported sites in new directories” option...

You can find the site in a page directory relative to the original site’s page directory. For example, if the original v1 site’s page directory was located here:

`http://www.example.com/moxie`

...then the imported site will be located here:

`http://www.example.com/moxie-bm2`

For sites whose page directories are the same as the domain root:

`http://www.example.com`

...the imported site will be located here:

`http://www.example.com/site-bm2`

If you did not choose the “Build all imported sites in new directories” option...

You can find the site in the same location as the original v1 site.

Resuming an import

If Big Medium encounters a problem (if it does not have permission to create a directory, for example), the import process will stop, and Big Medium will display a message explaining the problem.

After resolving the issue, you can restart the import process by going back to the beginning: Select “Import Legacy Sites” from the Settings menu of the Big Medium control panel.

The importer is clever enough to figure out where it left off so that it does not import the same data twice with one exception: **When resuming a stalled import, be sure that you leave the “Apply v1 privileges to v2 accounts of the same name” checked.** Otherwise, Big Medium will import all of the v1 accounts a second time under a new name.

Troubleshooting imported sites

The importer handles most site designs smoothly, but there are some changes and incompatibilities that may require minor changes to imported sites. These design variations can be addressed by editing the site’s templates and/or theme style sheet.



How do I edit templates and style sheets?

To edit templates, go to “Layout>Edit Templates” in the Big Medium control panel, and click on the template to edit.

To edit the theme style sheet, which contains your site’s custom CSS styles, go to “Layout>Edit Theme Style Sheet.”

This section describes common design inconsistencies for imported sites and solutions for common problems.

Image-based navigation

The HNAVIMAGE, VNAVIMAGE, HSUBNAVIMAGE and VSUBNAVIMAGE widgets from Big Medium 1.x are not supported in Big Medium 2. The importer handles this by generating the final HTML output for these widgets and embedding it directly into the templates of the imported site.

This creates navigation bars that are identical to those in the original v1.x site, but they are no longer updated automatically by Big Medium. This means that section changes (*e.g.*, new, reordered or deleted sections) are not automatically reflected in the site’s navigation without separately updating the templates.

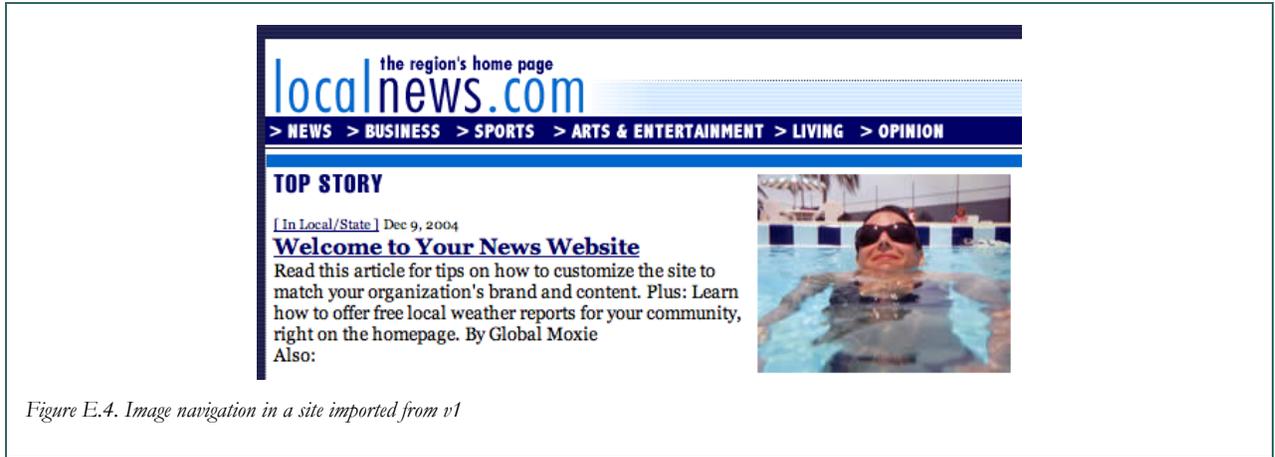


Figure E.4. Image navigation in a site imported from v1

If you don't plan to add or change sections in the imported site, then no problem; move along, nothing to see here.

But if you want Big Medium to be able to update the section navigation automatically, you should replace this generated image-navigation HTML with one of Big Medium's other navigation widgets, `<%navigation%>` or `<%subnavigation%>`.

These navigation widgets are text-based. If you prefer to keep your image-based navigation, the Global Moxie site offers [a tutorial on creating graphical navigation bars](#)¹ from Big Medium's text-based widgets.

Announcements

In Big Medium 2, announcements behave more like page content than they did in previous versions.

Announcements from subsections

The ANNOUNCE widget in Big Medium 1.x displayed only announcements that were assigned specifically to the current section. In Big Medium 2, the `<%announcements%>` widget displays announcements that are displayed in the current section, *plus all subsections*.

As a result, pages that displayed just one announcement in Big Medium 1.x may now display several announcements. The homepage, for example, will display all announcements from the entire site.

If you used the v1.x ANNOUNCE widget as a way to display editable text on section pages, you may find it more convenient to replace the `<%announcements%>` widget on section templates with the `<%content%>` widget.

Announcement titles

Announcements now have headline titles. The importer uses the placeholder word "Announcement" as the title for all imported announcements. You can edit these titles in the content editor ("Edit>Edit Announcements" in the Big Medium control panel).

¹ <http://beta.bigmedium.com/help/faq/design/styles/image-navigation.shtml>

Images

If you relied on previous versions of Big Medium to resize your images to precise dimensions, and if your server does not have one of the recommended image libraries installed (ImageMagick, GD, NetPBM or Imager), images will be displayed in their original size instead of the resized version that you had in previous versions. This could result in very large images being shown in places where you want much smaller images.

This same issue applies to images entered as URLs in Big Medium v1 (as opposed to uploaded image files). Even if you have the image libraries described above, Big Medium does not resize images entered as URLs, and they will instead be displayed in their original size.

You can resolve these issues by adding specific heights and widths for each type of image in your theme style sheets.

```
div.bmw_link img { /* link images, a.k.a "thumbnail images" in v1 */
  width: 175px;
  height: 100px;
}

div.bmw_spotlightLinks div.bmw_link img { /* spotlight images */
  width: 200px;
  height: 200px;
}

div.bmw_pageContent img { /* "body images" embedded in article text */
  width: 300px;
  height: 200px;
}
```

Example E.1. Enforce image dimensions via CSS

Related links

Big Medium 2 introduces two changes to the way that related links are displayed below links to a page. (There are no changes to how related links are displayed on the page itself, only with promotional links to the page.)

Related links are displayed in a bulleted list

Previous versions of Big Medium simply separated related links with `
` line breaks. Big Medium 2 puts them into a `` bullet list. To make the display look more similar to the v1.x format, add these styles to the theme style sheet:

```
div.bmw_link ul, div.bmw_link li {
  margin:0;
  padding:0;
  list-style:none;
}
```

All related links are shown

Previous versions of Big Medium displayed only the first two related links alongside links to a page. Big Medium 2 now shows all links. You cannot choose individual related links to be displayed with links to the page; it's all or nothing. You can turn off the display of related links as part of link content in the site's HTML preferences: "Settings>HTML Preferences>Links."

Page content doesn't wrap

In previous versions, page content and link widgets would wrap around floated or left/right-aligned elements (including the v1.x TOOLPANEL widget) that came immediately before. In Big Medium 2, those layouts now create a "gutter," and the text that used to wrap no longer completes the wrap.

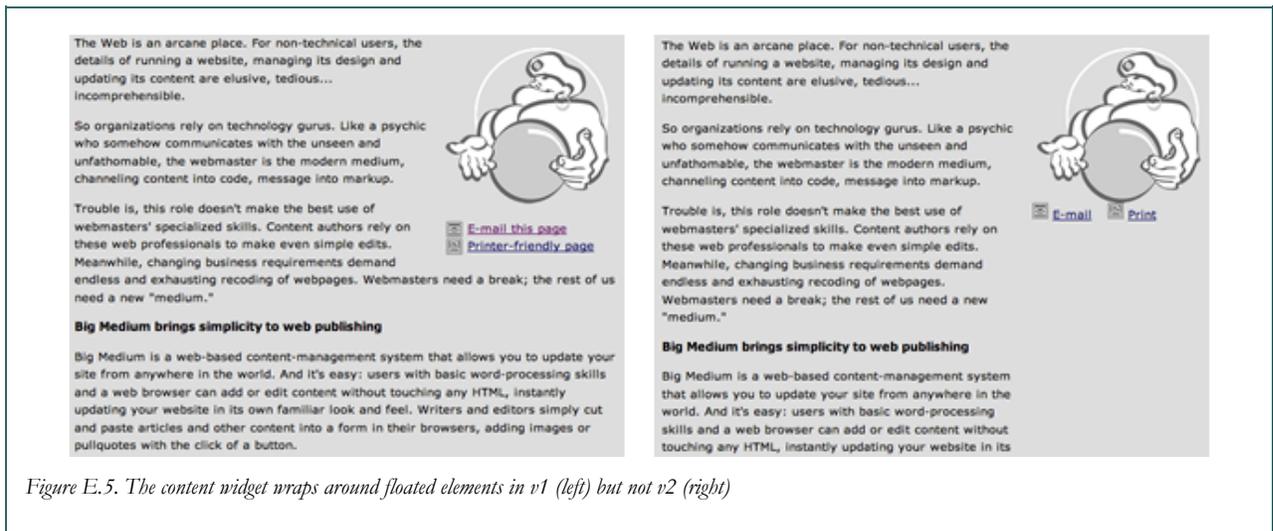


Figure E.5. The content widget wraps around floated elements in v1 (left) but not v2 (right)

If you don't want this effect, you can fix it by adding a custom style in the theme style sheet:

```
div.bmw_pageContent {  
    overflow:visible;  
}
```

CSS hacks for v1.x widgets

Big Medium 2 has changed much of the underlying markup and CSS of sites generated by Big Medium. If your site relies on custom CSS changes to the CSS styles of Big Medium widgets, those changes will probably not work in Big Medium 2.

Feel free to lean on the Big Medium support forum to revise these CSS hacks. Post your questions, along with before-and-after links to the v1 and v2 pages that display the problems, to [the Big Medium 2 support forum](#)².

² <http://globalmoxie.com/ask/>

