How To Create Your
Own Town Portal Website
Without writing a
single line of code!

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Please note: Due to the free nature of this email, no support is provided. At the rear of the ebook you will find resources where you can find technical as well as marketing information.

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Introduction

A portal site is a website designed to advertise local businesses on the internet. Basically, the owner of the site will get advertisers to pay them x amount a month or a year to list the advertisers business on the site.

Portal sites are a great way of making money and given a bit of work, and talking to the right people (local business owners) you can have a very popular local portal site making you money and providing referrals to local businesses. And best of all, you can generate a recurring income from portal sites.

There are systems available where you pay someone else to provide the portal for you. You then get business owners to advertise on your portal and charge them more so that you make a profit from the system. The problem with this business model is that you have to pay someone else from your earnings, from your hard work in getting the advertisers. You're effectively paying someone else for doing not a lot, on their part. You can easily setup your own Portal site and keep 100% of profits for yourself.

In this book, I am going to show you that you do not need to pay someone else to have your own portal site built. I will show you that you need no technical know how to set up your own portal and that you can set up a portal site using Free software, so the only upfront cost to you is a domain name and a hosting account. And all this is so that you will keep 100% of all money you generate, rather than having to pay someone else for your efforts.

This is a step-by-step guide, I will show you every step you need to take to set up a portal site and, believe or not, you're not going write a single line of code, not even a humble HTML tag!

Follow these instructions carefully, and you can have your own portal site up and running in just a few hours.

> **Side note**: Please do not skip any of the steps I outline, I know you are eager to get your site up and running, but missing out a step in the setup will give you problems later on.

> **Side note:** This manual was originally written for Joomla 1.0.13. Since then, Joomla 1.5 was released. I did not update this manual for Joomla 1.5 immediately because, as with all new software, I decided to let them iron out any bugs before updating this manual. More than a year has now passed and most of the initial bugs in Joomla 1.5 have been rectified, so I have now updated this manual so that you can use the latest version of Joomla.

What this manual isn't

This manual is not a marketing manual. I have deliberately kept Marketing out of it, because Marketing a website like this is a huge subject by itself. But to

help you with Marketing, please check out the resource section at the end of this manual.

Also, this is not an administrators guide to Joomla. Again, that is a huge subject in itself, and there are some great resources available, and for this Google is your friend. But we're jumping ahead of ourselves here.

Let's get started building your website.

Section 1 – What you need

Domain Name and Hosting

Obviously to have a website you will need a domain name and hosting. For your domain name, I would suggest you try and find a name that includes the town name. Something like www.stamfordbusinessdirectory.com or www.stamfordshopping.com.

I would also suggest using http://www.namecheap.com to get your domain name. They are extremely cheap, at under $10 ($9.29 at the time of writing) for a year. They also provide a free privacy option, that you can use to make sure your name and address doesn't show if someone wants to find out more about the owner of a website.

Fantastico De Luxe   This updated version of the manual has been written around using cpanel with fantastico support, simply because it is extremely easy to install the latest version of Joomla this way. Personally I use http://www.hostgator.com, but any hosting service that uses cpanel with fantastico will work fine.

Software

As I said in the introduction, the software that you need to set up a portal website is free open source software. It is based on a Content Management System (CMS) called Joomla.

If you already know what a CMS is, you can just skip over this bit, but if you don't know then please read on.

If you haven't heard about CMS's, basically they are PHP website systems that once set up allow the administrator to create new content without the need to create HTML website pages. You can create new content using a What You See Is What You Get (WYSIWYG) editor (much like a wordprocessor) and at the click of a button publish the new content to your website.

The content is created in an Administration back-office that only you (as the administrator) have access to. This area is not available on the public website so you can create content, check how it looks and a whole lot more without it affecting the public pages, until you decide to publish the new content.

There is a whole lot more that you can do with a CMS, especially one as powerful as Joomla, and the beauty of Joomla is that there are literally

hundreds of plug-ins that you can use, many for free, to add more functionality to your website and your users experience.

I am not going to get into a discussion on the many plug-ins that are available, but I will tell you about the ones you will need to set up your portal site, don't worry I will walk you through how to set up Joomla and the plug-ins that you need and then how to configure it to be used as a portal site, and I'll repeat what I said in the introduction, you are not going to write a single line of code.

Another great advantage of using a CMS such as Joomla is that you can recruit people to help you keep your website updated. This is accomplished because Joomla allows you to create user accounts on several different levels. So, for instance, you could have a club news section in your website and recruit club secretaries to keep their own section updated.

Anyway, back to the installation.

Preparing your computer

Before you start downloading the software required to set up your portal website, can I suggest that you create a new folder on your computers desktop and call it something like Portal Software. This will be the folder that you download all the software to before uploading it to your server. It keeps everything in one place and neat and tidy!

Getting the Software

The core CMS system can be installed via your cpanel so you don't need to worry about that just for the moment. I will now show you where to get the plugins that you will need to make your Joomla site into a town portal.

The directory software

The directory software that we will use with Joomla is called Sobi2. You can download it from

http://www.sigsiu.net/download/components/sigsiu_online_business_index_2.html

On that page you will see a blue download button, click on it. A new window will open with the license information, please read them and then at the bottom of the window tick the agree box and click on the download button. Save the file into your Portal Software folder.

While you are still on the Sigsiu.net website, please also download the Menu module. You do this by hovering your mouse over the Download menu at the top, and clicking the Modules link.

In the content area of the website is a list of add-on Modules you can use to add functionality to your portal site. Click on the link Menu Module. When the page refreshes, click on the Download button.

A new window will appear again, with the License information. Scroll to the bottom and click on the I Accept tick box, followed by the Download button. The file will be downloaded.

The Menu Module is pretty important to helping your visitors navigate around your directory, so please don't skip this step.

In addition, I would also recommend getting the Latest Entries Module. This module will show a list of the most recent company entries and is great for keeping your front page fresh with new content.

Templates

There are many places where you can get Joomla templates, just do a quick Google search for "Joomla template" and you will find thousands. But to get you started quickly, you should have downloaded the templates that I provided when you downloaded this ebook. If you didn't download them, you can get them free from http://www.mytownportal.biz/templates.

Other extensions

Search Engine Friendly URLs

When you initially set up Joomla, the URLs for new content are pretty ugly and not Search Engine Friendly. So, to make the URLs Search Engine Friendly (SEF), you will need to download a SEF component for Joomla. Unfortunately this may take a bit of trial and error, because some SEF components will not work with a particular web host.

Having said that, I got sh404sef to work fine with my Joomla installation. So to get sh404sef, go to http://dev.anything-digital.com/sh404sef-downloads.html. Click on the link that says sh404SEF v1.5 Release Candidate. You will be required to register with the website before you can download the software. When you have completed the subscription and logged in save the software to your Portal Software folder.

Section 2 – Installing Joomla with cPanel

Before you can carry out this step, you need to have your domain and hosting already setup. I'm not going into how to do this, simply because there is plenty of information available about this online. Also your chosen hosting company will help you with this. I do, however, recommend hostgator, as their customer service is excellent.

Back to the core Joomla installation.

Log into your cPanel using http://www.yourdomainname.com/cpanel.

When you are logged in you will see the following screen:
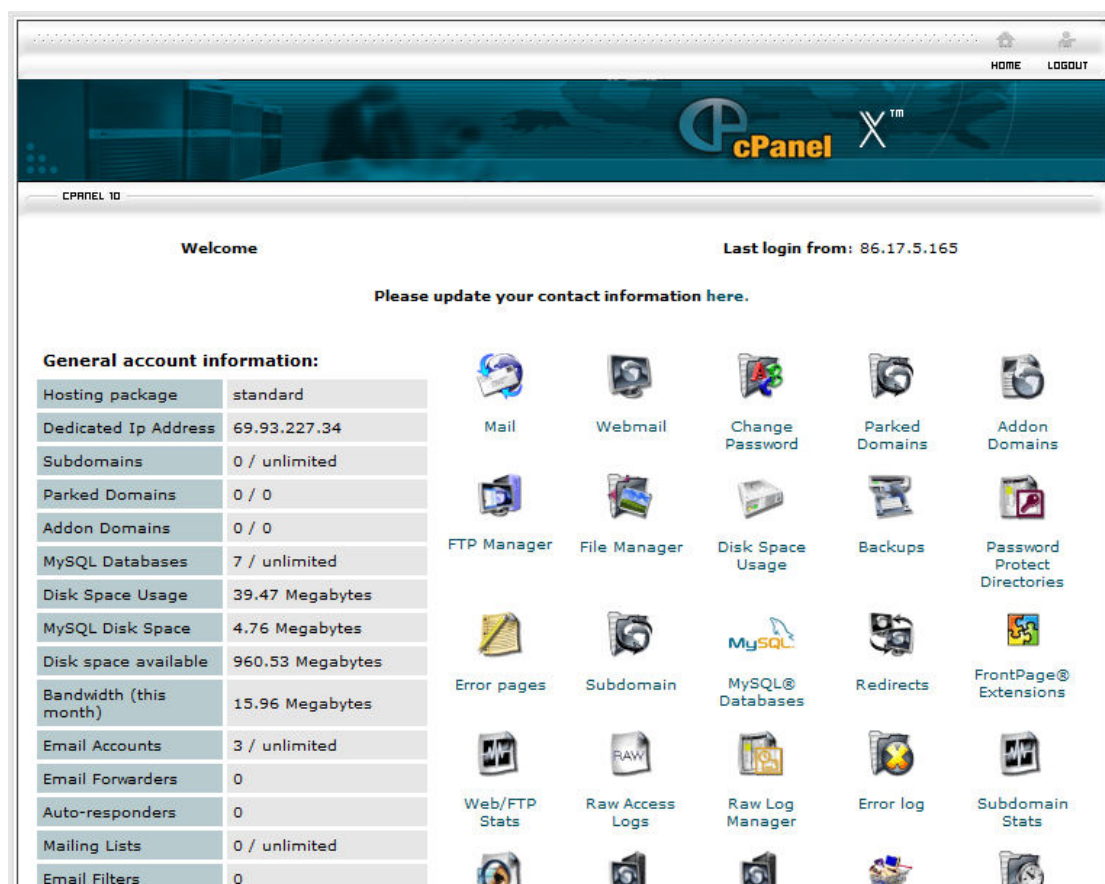
Scroll down the page. At the bottom you will see the Fantastico De Luxe icon:

Click on this icon, you will see the following screen:
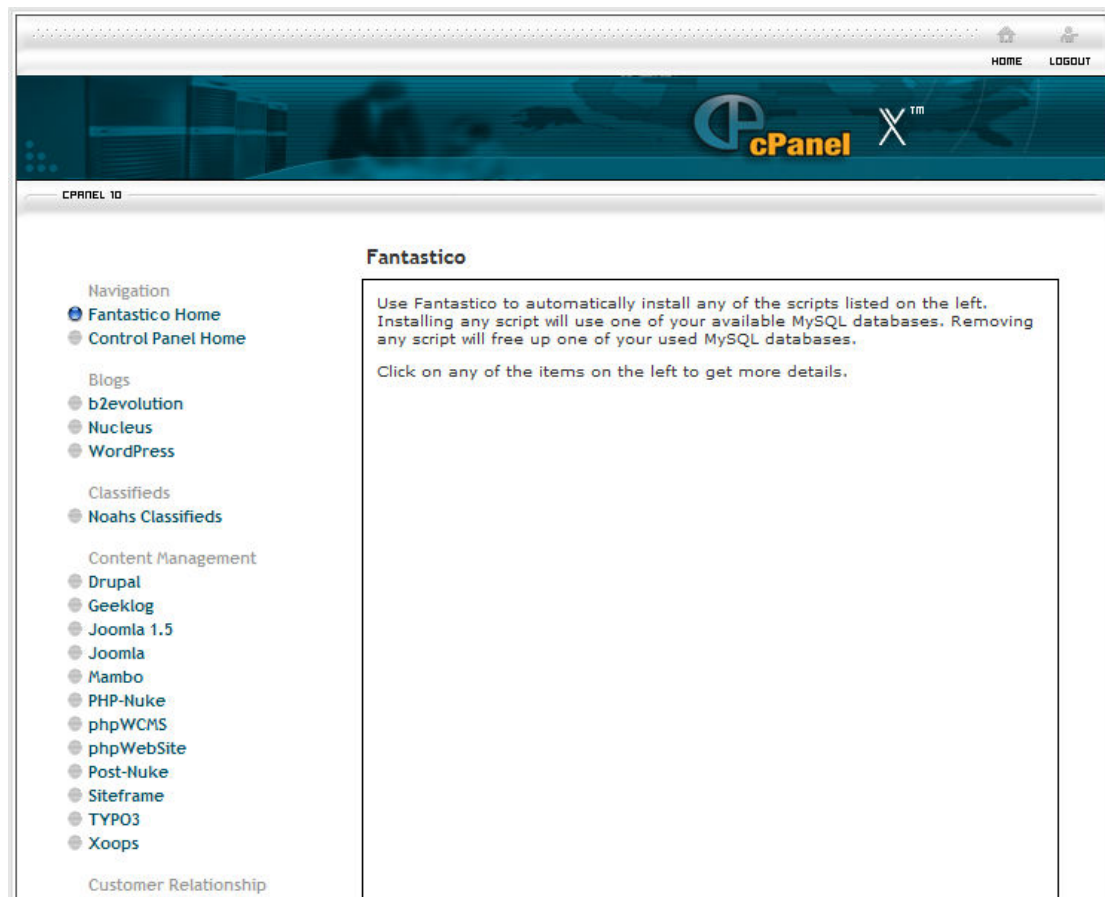
As there are no installations yet, the right panel will be empty. Down the left side you will see a list of applications that you can install using Fantastico.

You can see that there are two entries for Joomla; one says Joomla 1.5 and one just Joomla. Click on the Joomla 1.5 link and you will see the following screen:

Click on the New Installation link. Your screen will change to the following:

You can leave the Install in directory field blank. This will cause the system to be setup so that the front page of your installation will be your website home page.

Fill in the fields Administrator-username and Password. Make sure you write these down so that you don't forget them.

Fill in the Admin e-mail address field. This email address is used when the system needs to notify you of any changes as well as when a visitor wants to contact you, so make sure you use a live email address and not a dummy one.

You can leave the Install Sample Data box ticked if you like, it is up to you. If you leave it checked some information pages will be installed, but you can change or remove it later.

To start the installation, click on the Install Joomla 1.5 button.

The installation should take less than a minute to complete. When it is complete you will see the following screen:
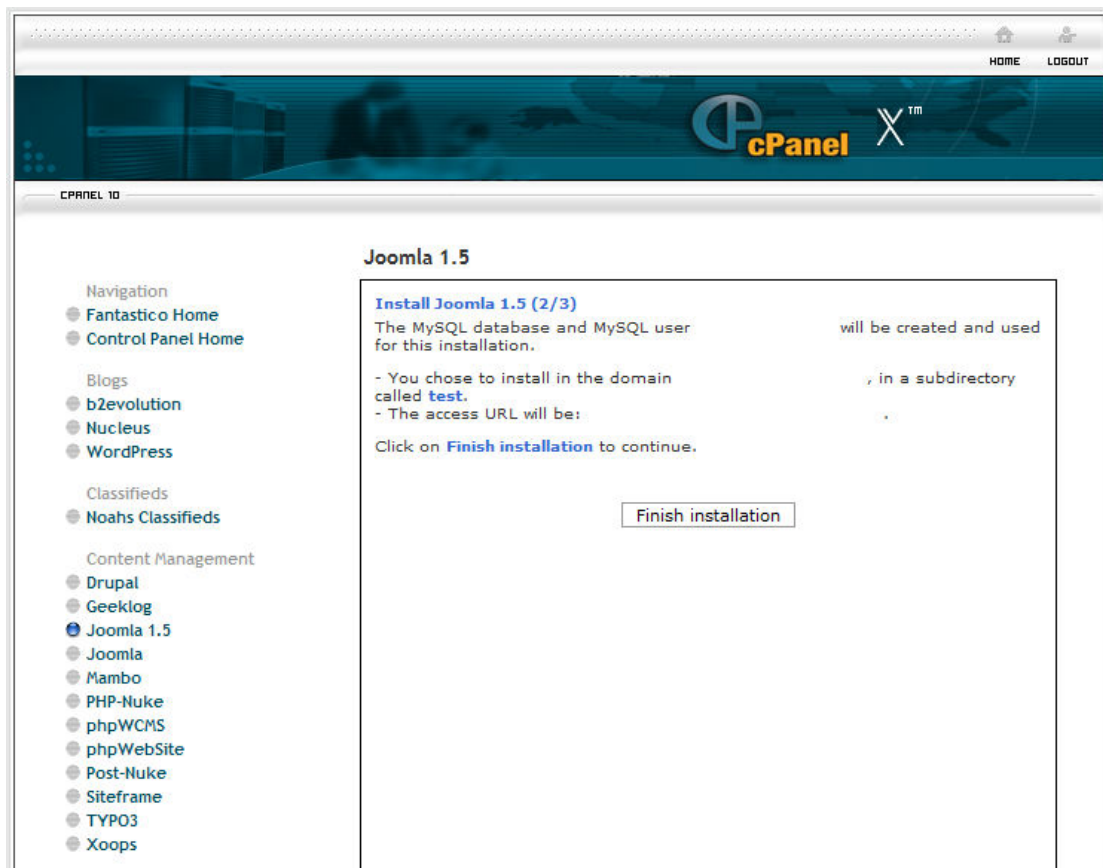
Your screen will have your MySQL user showing, as well as your install domain and the access URL, which will be your domain name.

Click on the Finish Installation button, to complete the process.

> **Sidenote:** On some hosting servers, an error message may appear telling you that the installation cannot complete because some files already exist. If you get this message, what I have found is the there is one folder on your server that needs to be deleted before the installation will run correctly.
>
> The folder is called images. To remove it do the following:
>
> In your cpanel, click on the File Manager icon. A list of the folders and files will appear, like this:

File Manager		X

Click on a folder icon to navigate.
Click on a name to view its properties.

📁	/ (Current Folder)	
📁	**Create New Folder**	
⬆	**Upload file(s)**	
📁	.cpanel	755
📁	.fantasticodata	755
📁	.htpasswds	750
📁	.trash	700
📁	access-logs	750
📁	etc	750
📁	mail	770
📁	public_ftp	755
📁	public_html	750
📁	tmp	755
📁	www	750
📄	**Create New File**	
📄	.bash_logout	0 k 0644
📄	.bash_profile	0 k 0644
📄	.bashrc	0 k 0644
📄	.canna	5 k 0644
📄	.contactemail	0 k 0600
📄	.emacs	0 k 0644
📄	.lastlogin	0 k 0600
📄	.mod_php_migration	0 k 0644
📄	.zshrc	0 k 0644

Trash
Click on the trashcan to empty it.
Click on an object below to restore it.

Click on the folder to the left of public_html.

A new list of files and folders will appear. Scroll down the page until you can see the folder called images. Click on the folder name (not the folder icon). On the right of your screen, a list of options will appear, like this:

📁 images

Delete this folder and all files under it
Rename this folder
Change Permissions
Move this folder
Copy this folder

Click on the link Delete this folder and all the files under it. This will remove the folder. Now you can go back to the start of the Joomla installation process, on page 7.

Finally, in your browser address bar, type in your domain name and you will see the installed Joomla site. It will look like this:
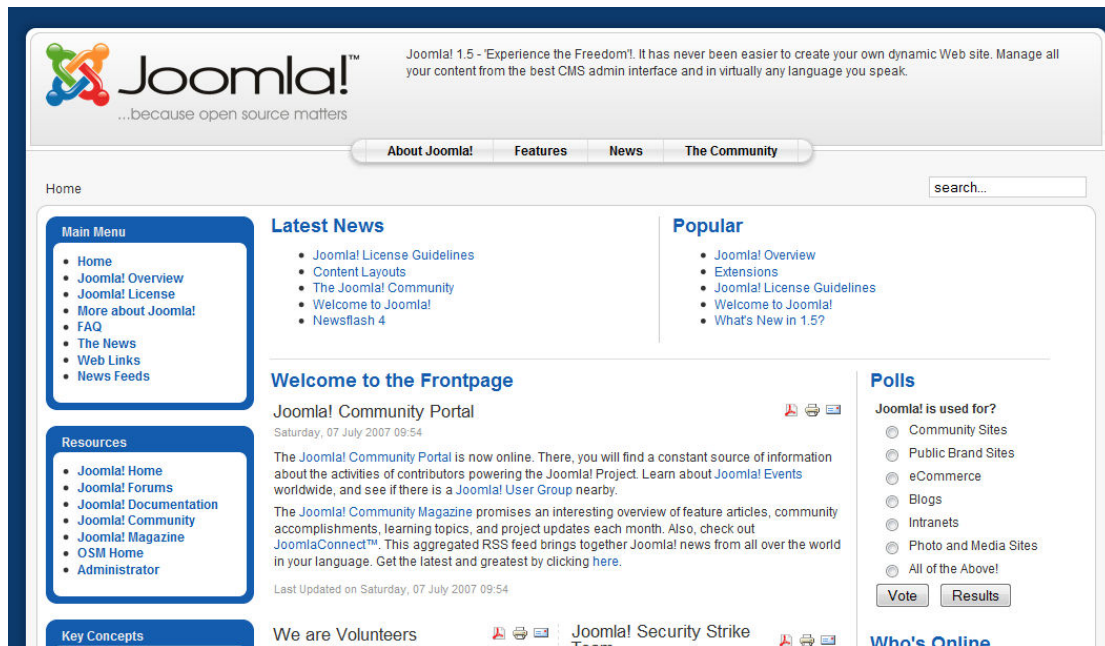
Phew, you've done a great deal now, in just a few minutes. You now have a fully working Joomla CMS. I think it's about time you took a break, grab a coffee and put your feet up for a while. In the next section you are going to start customising your Joomla installation and making it into your own town portal website. But don't worry, the most technical thing you need do is click your mouse button!

Section 3 - Customising the CMS

Had a good break? Great, let's get started with making a few changes to the CMS so that it can be used as a Local Business Portal.

Changing .htaccess

Before we go in and configure your website there are a couple of things that you will need to do to help it work properly. Firstly htaccess.

.htaccess is a file that is uploaded to your server, when you installed joomla. The purpose of .htaccess files is to provide a means to configure Apache (the server) for users who cannot modify the main configuration file because their hosting company does not allow it. This is usually on servers that use shared hosting, ie lots of websites on the same hosting service.

Don't worry though, there is no coding to do, just follow these steps and you'll be fine.

Firstly, log into your websites cpanel. This varies, but in general you can log in by typing your domain name followed by /cpanel in your browsers address bar, like http://www.yourdomianname.com/cpanel.

Once you are in, you will see the following screen:
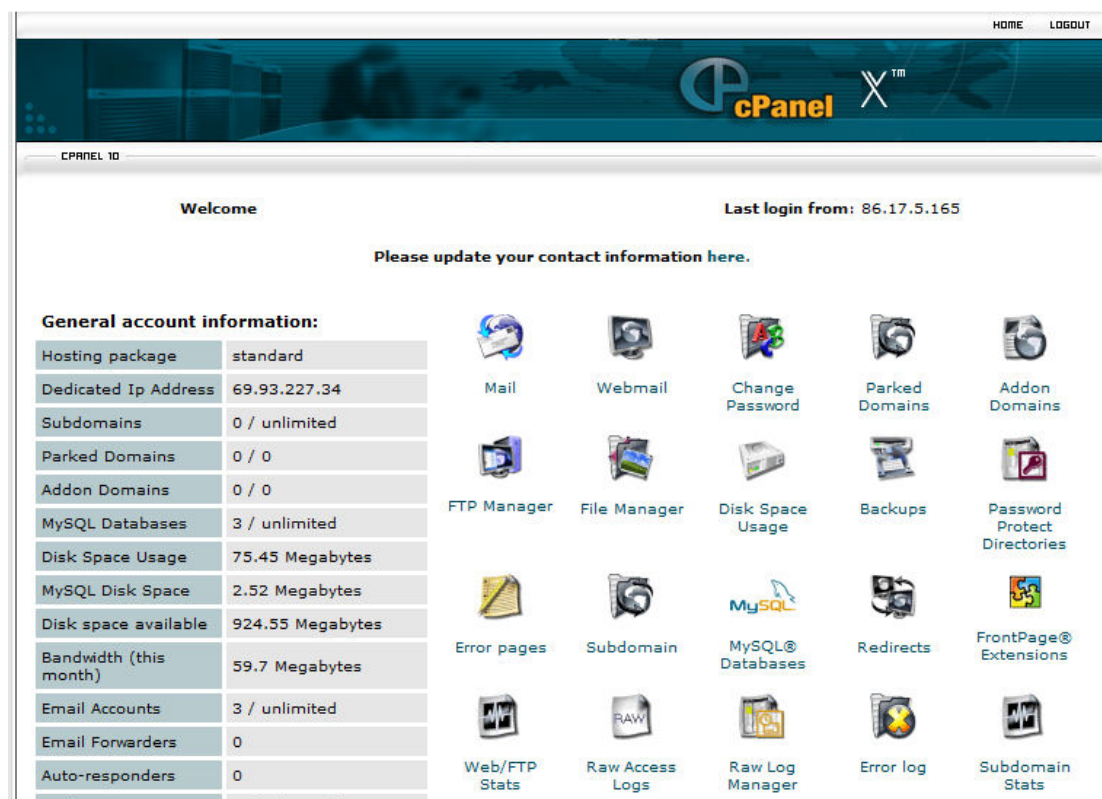
Click on the File Manager icon.

When you are in the File Manager you will see the following screen:

On the left you will see a list of all the folders and files that are in the root of your server. Look for the folder public_html and double click on the folder icon.

The screen will change to show the folders and files that are installed under the public_html folder.

Scroll down the screen and find the file named htaccess.txt. When you find it, single click on it. When you do, notice that the top right of the screen changes to give you some options that you can perform on the file. It looks like this:
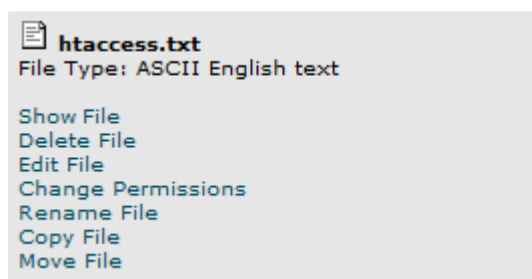
Click on the Rename File link. The top right of your screen will change to provide you with a text input box. In the box type in **.htaccess** (please note the full stop at the beginning, it is important). When you are done, click on the Rename button to the right of the text input box.

Now if you look on the left, the file name has changed and it is now the first file under the folders.

Now you need to change a couple of lines within the file itself. To do this, click on the file. The top right of your screen will change again. This time click on the Edit File link. Your screen will change to look like this:

```
##
# @version $Id: htaccess.txt 10492 2008-07-02 06:38:28Z ircmaxell $
# @package Joomla
# @copyright Copyright (C) 2005 - 2008 Open Source Matters. All rights reserved.
# @license http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/gpl.html GNU/GPL
# Joomla! is Free Software
##


#####################################################
#  READ THIS COMPLETELY IF YOU CHOOSE TO USE THIS FILE
#
# The line just below this section: 'Options +FollowSymLinks' may cause problems
# with some server configurations.  It is required for use of mod_rewrite, but may already
# be set by your server administrator in a way that dissallows changing it in
# your .htaccess file.  If using it causes your server to error out, comment it out (add
# to
# beginning of line), reload your site in your browser and test your sef url's.  If they work,
# it has been set by your server administrator and you do not need it set here.
#
#####################################################

##  Can be commented out if causes errors, see notes above.
Options +FollowSymLinks

#
#  mod_rewrite in use

RewriteEngine On

########## Begin - Rewrite rules to block out some common exploits
## If you experience problems on your site block out the operations listed below
## This attempts to block the most common type of exploit `attempts` to Joomla!
#
# Block out any script trying to set a mosConfig value through the URL
RewriteCond %{QUERY_STRING} mosConfig_[a-zA-Z_]{1,21}(=|\%3D) [OR]
# Block out any script trying to base64_encode crap to send via URL
RewriteCond %{QUERY_STRING} base64_encode.*\(.*\) [OR]
# Block out any script that includes a <script> tag in URL
```

Save file as: .htaccess

I know, it looks like a foreign language! Don't worry though, as long as you only change the lines mentioned below, you'll be fine.

Firstly, the line beginning with a # are commented lines, in other words when the code is run, lines beginning with a # are ignored. So what you need to do is look for the following code and ensure that there is not a # at the beginning of the line. If there is, just select the # with your mouse and delete it.

So, the lines that you are looking for are:

Options +FollowSymLinks

RewriteEngine On

RewriteBase /

If any of these lines begins with a #, delete the # only, leaving the rest of the line.
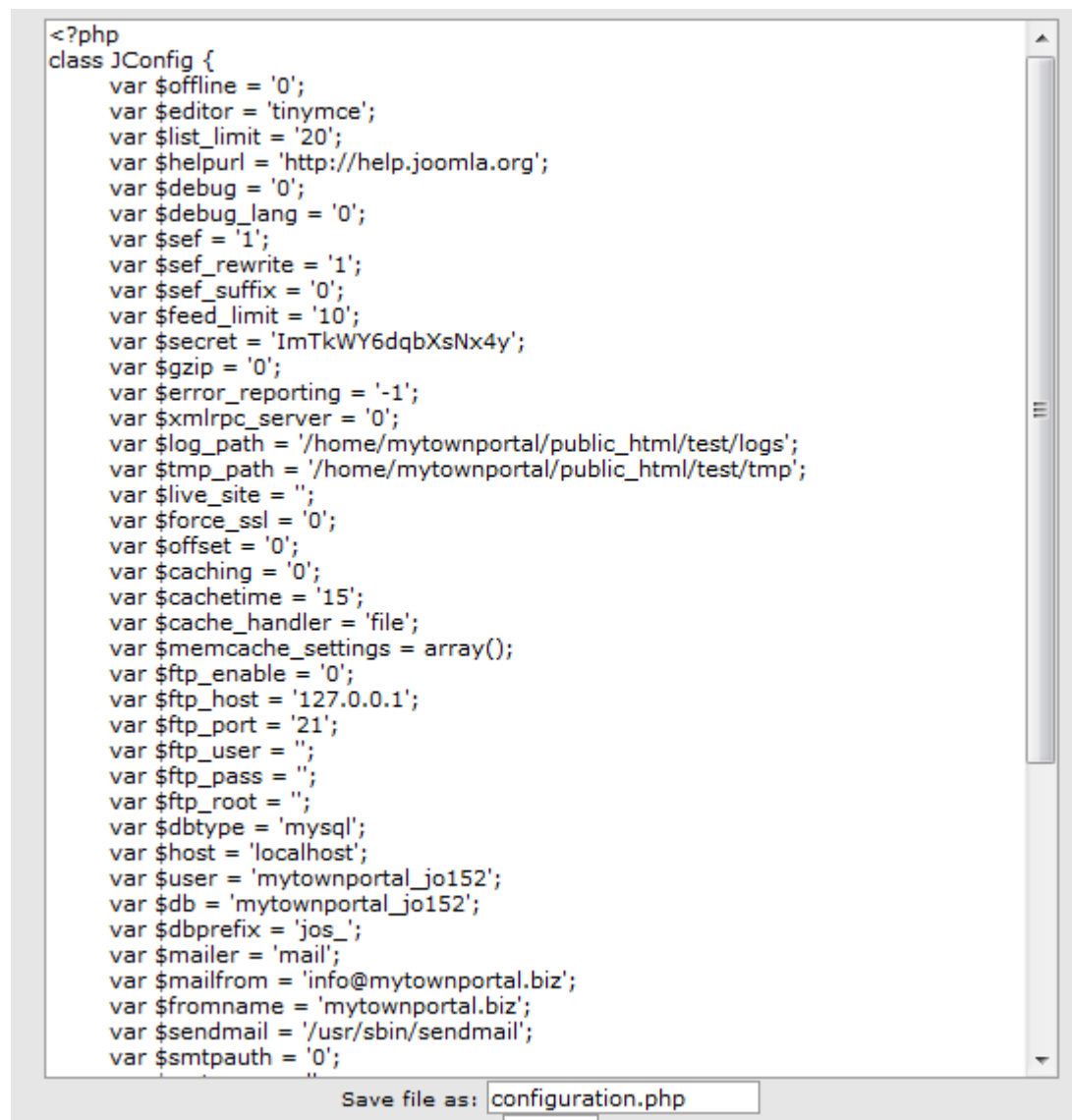
Sidenote: If, when you installed your joomla site, you installed it in a subfolders (http://www.yourdomain.com/joomla), you will also need to change the line with RewriteBase / in it. Just add the name of the subfolder that you installed joomla into after the / . For instance, if you installed joomla into a folder called joomla, change the line to read RewriteBase /joomla

When you have made the above checks/changes, click on the Save button at the bottom of the screen, to save your changes.

Ok, one more thing to do in your File Manager.

If you still have it open, look down the list of files, and find the file called configuration.php. As before, click on it and the select Edit File from the list in the top right corner. You see this screen:

```php
<?php
class JConfig {
        var $offline = '0';
        var $editor = 'tinymce';
        var $list_limit = '20';
        var $helpurl = 'http://help.joomla.org';
        var $debug = '0';
        var $debug_lang = '0';
        var $sef = '1';
        var $sef_rewrite = '1';
        var $sef_suffix = '0';
        var $feed_limit = '10';
        var $secret = 'ImTkWY6dqbXsNx4y';
        var $gzip = '0';
        var $error_reporting = '-1';
        var $xmlrpc_server = '0';
        var $log_path = '/home/mytownportal/public_html/test/logs';
        var $tmp_path = '/home/mytownportal/public_html/test/tmp';
        var $live_site = '';
        var $force_ssl = '0';
        var $offset = '0';
        var $caching = '0';
        var $cachetime = '15';
        var $cache_handler = 'file';
        var $memcache_settings = array();
        var $ftp_enable = '0';
        var $ftp_host = '127.0.0.1';
        var $ftp_port = '21';
        var $ftp_user = '';
        var $ftp_pass = '';
        var $ftp_root = '';
        var $dbtype = 'mysql';
        var $host = 'localhost';
        var $user = 'mytownportal_jo152';
        var $db = 'mytownportal_jo152';
        var $dbprefix = 'jos_';
        var $mailer = 'mail';
        var $mailfrom = 'info@mytownportal.biz';
        var $fromname = 'mytownportal.biz';
        var $sendmail = '/usr/sbin/sendmail';
        var $smtpauth = '0';
```

Save file as: configuration.php

Look down the list, and you'll find the line var $live_site = '';

What you need to do here is enter your websites URL between the quote marks. You need to type in http://www.yourdomainname.com so that it will look like this

var $live_site = 'http://www.yourdomainname.com';

> **Sidenote:** If you have installed joomla in a sub folder of your website, then you'll need to type in the subfolder name too, like:
>
> var $live_site = 'http://www.yourdomainname.com/joomla';

Once you have made the change, click on the Save button at the bottom of the screen. You are now done with these changes, you can now log out of your cpanel.

Now that you have done that, you can start changing the look and functionality of your website, and configuring joomla.

Changing the look of your website

One of the beauties of Content Management Systems is that the look and feel of the public website can be changed extremely easily, without any changes to the core functionality of the CMS and (more to the point) without knowing a thing about PHP, HTML and CSS.

How does it work.

Most if not all CMS's are based on the concept that content is kept separate from the design (the look) of your website, and Joomla is no exception.

The look of your website can be changed at the click of the mouse because the look of your website is based on a template system. The template is the web page that your visitors see and is controlled from within your administrator back office.

The core functionality of Joomla can also be modified by a system of Components and Modules that you can simply plug in at the click of your mouse. And this is exactly how you are going to change Joomla to make it into your local business portal.

I'll talk more about where you can get templates from and how you can extend the functionality of your website in a little while, for now let's use one of the templates that are provided with your Joomla installation and upload the components that you downloaded earlier.

Changing the template

Ok, let's now change the template to one that I think is more suitable for a portal site.

Side note: I am going to show you how to set up the joomla system using the template townportal.zip, which is one of the templates that you should have downloaded with this ebook.

If you are not already logged into your administrative back office, do so now, by typing www.yourdomain.com/administrator and filling in the log in form, using the Administrator username and password that you created earlier.

You should now see the following screen:
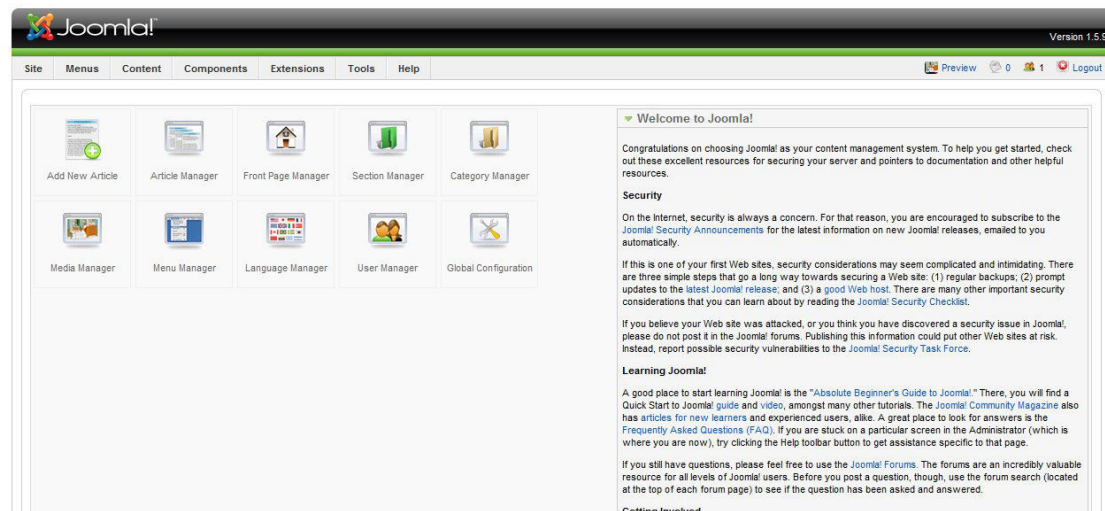
Hover your mouse over the Extensions option in the top menu bar, and select Template Manager. You will see the following:
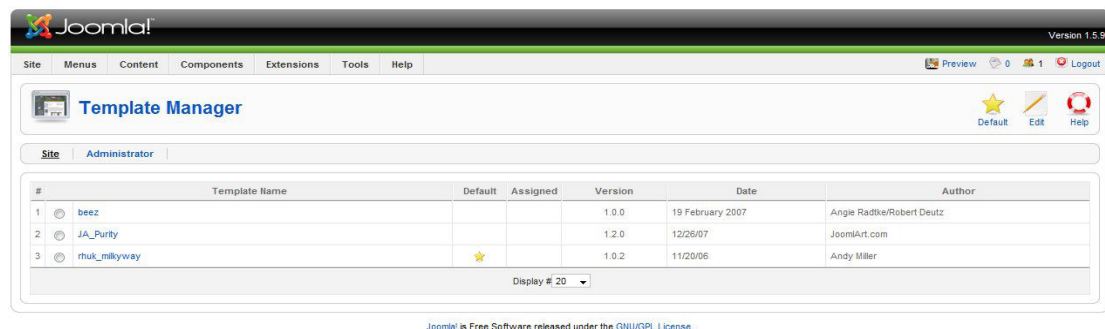
This screen shows you the three templates that were installed when you installed Joomla. To change the template to one of these simply click on the radio button (the round button to the left of the template name) and click on the Default button, in to right of the screen.

> **Sidenote:** I do not recommend you click on the Edit button, unless you are familiar with PHP!

You can view the changed template by opening another browser window, and typing in your domain name in the address bar.

If you want to change to a totally different template (either one of the templates provided with this ebook, or from another source) then you will need to use the inbuilt installer. Here's how.

Hover your mouse over the Extensions menu at the of the page, and click on the Install/Uninstall menu option. You'll see the following screen:
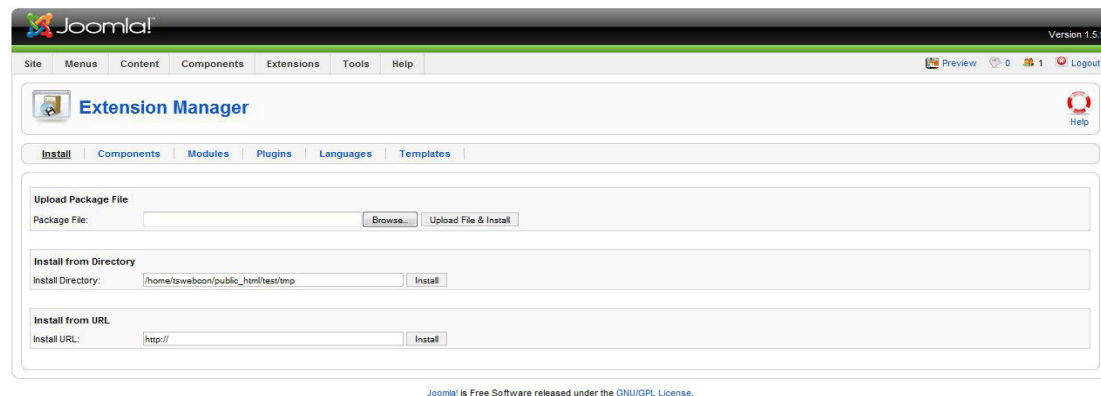
Now, the great thing about this version of Joomla, as opposed to previous versions, is that all components, modules and templates use this same Extension Manager screen. This makes your life much easier!

To install your new template, click on the Browse button. A standard Windows Open dialog box will appear allowing you to navigate to the template zip file that you want to use.

When you have located the file you want, click on the Open button, in the dialog box. This will put the file location in the Package File field of the above screen. You can also type the files location into this field, but it is just as easy to use the browse button to locate the file.

When the file you want is in the Package File field, click on the Upload File & Install button. All being well, when the file is uploaded and installed within the Joomla system, the screen should show a success message, like this:
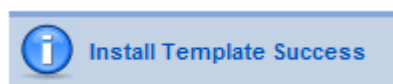
All this has done is install the template, your site appearance has not yet changed, so lets do that now.

As before, hover your mouse over the Extensions menu, at the top and this time click on the Template Manager menu item.
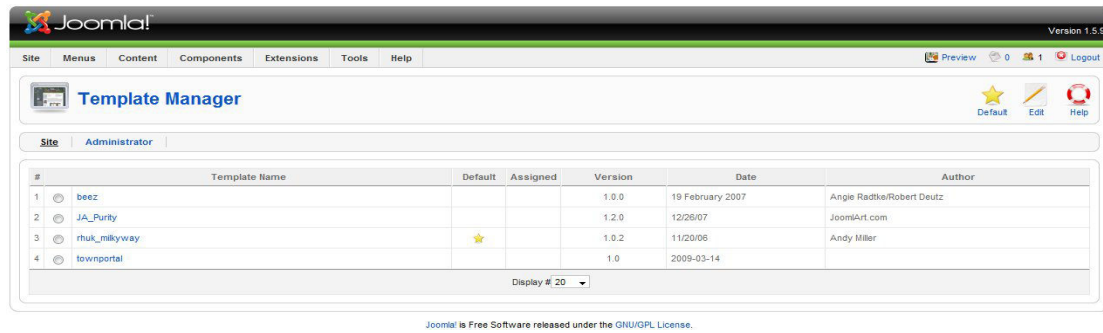
The last item on the list will be the template that you have just uploaded. To activate that template, click on the button to the left of the template name and then click on the Default button, in the top right of the screen. If you now open a new browser window and navigate to your domain, you will see that your front page has changed to the template you have just installed. Here's the one I just uploaded (townportal.zip).
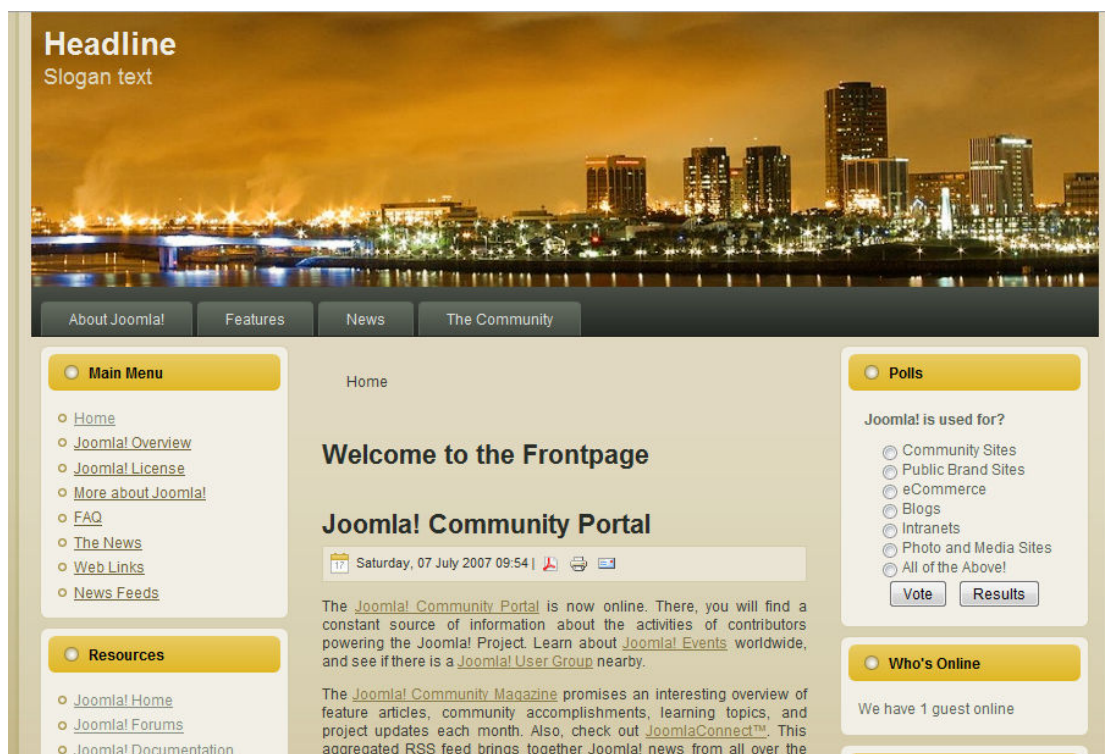
That is how easy it is to totally change the look and feel of your website. It's so cool!

I'm going to leave that template in use for the rest of this manual.

Before I go any further, I think it is about time that you understand a bit about how the Joomla system works, so here I will give you some background information that will help you later.

About the Joomla system

The Joomla system is made up of Templates, Modules and Components. As already explained and demonstrated, the template provides the basic look of your website. Modules and Components add the content to your website. Modules are mostly smaller content items, such as newsflashes and menus, and are mostly shown in designated areas of the template. Components provide more complex functionality, such as forums, or in the case of your portal website, the business directory and their content is shown in the main area of your template.

Where the Modules and Components plug into your template is determined partly by the template designer. If you go to your browser and type in www.yourdomain.com/?tp=1 you will see the following:
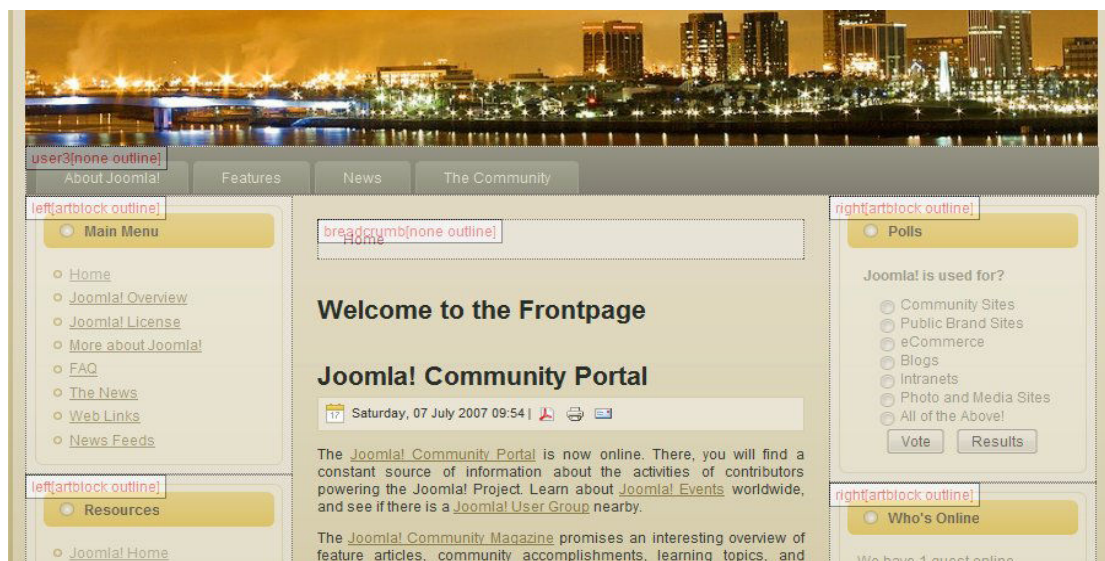
This shows the areas that the designer has allowed you, the user, to place your modules and components in. Some designs will have more fields than others, so it is worth checking this out when you are choosing a template for your website.

One thing that you have to know about the Joomla system is that content items must be linked to from a menu, otherwise it will only exist in the Joomla database and not be shown on your website. This is important and you'll see why shortly.
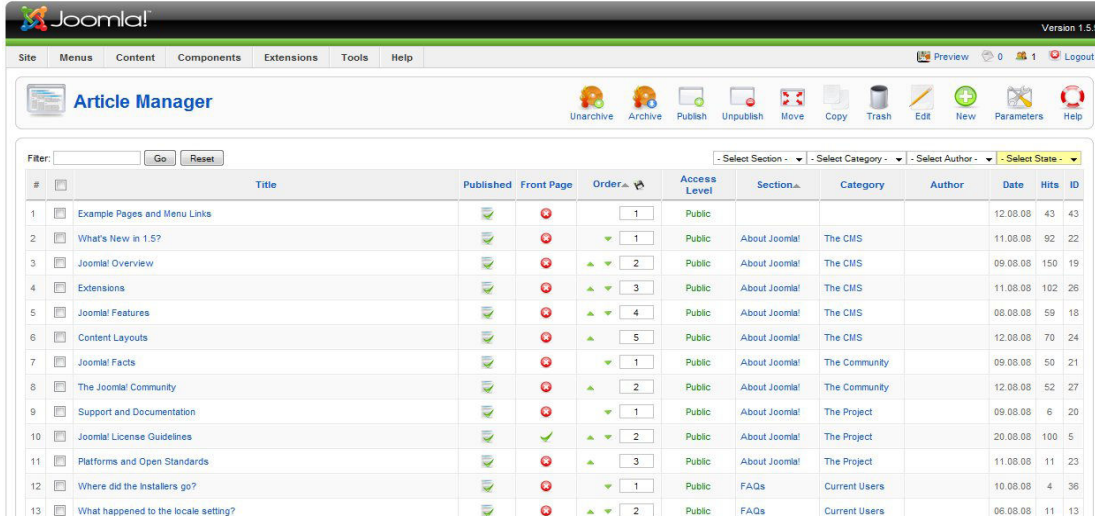
Ok, now we have an idea of how the Joomla system works and where you can put various Modules and Components, it's now time to remove some of the content you see on that screen, because obviously we don't want people to see all that Joomla stuff.

Removing existing content

If you have logged out of the administrator back office, log back in now.

Hover your mouse over the top menu item Content and then select Article Manager. You will see the following on your screen:

As you can see all the content items that were set up when you installed Joomla can be controlled from here.

If you click on the content item Title, you will be taken to a new screen where you can edit that content item. But, you don't need to do that for your portal website, you need to remove the items from public view.

In the Published column, you will see small icons, with green ticks, that shows that the item is published (ie visible) somewhere on your website. And the other column to note is the Frontpage column. If there is a tick against an item, then that item is visible on the front page of your website, that is the index page. If there is a cross against the item, it is not visible on the front page, but may be visible via a link on a menu.

For our purposes here we need to unpublish all of this. To do that, firstly scroll down to the bottom of the page. You'll see the following:

Click on the down arrow next to the 20. A dropdown menu will show, select the bottom option "all". Your screen will change to show all the articles currently in the system.

Next tick the box at the top of the first column, to the right of the #. This will

select all the items listed. You then click on the unpublish button in the button bar at the top right. This will unpublish (remove from public view) all the items, but it hasn't deleted them from your database. This means you can republish them anytime you want.

If you now open a new browser window and type in your domain name, in the address bar, you will see the following screen:
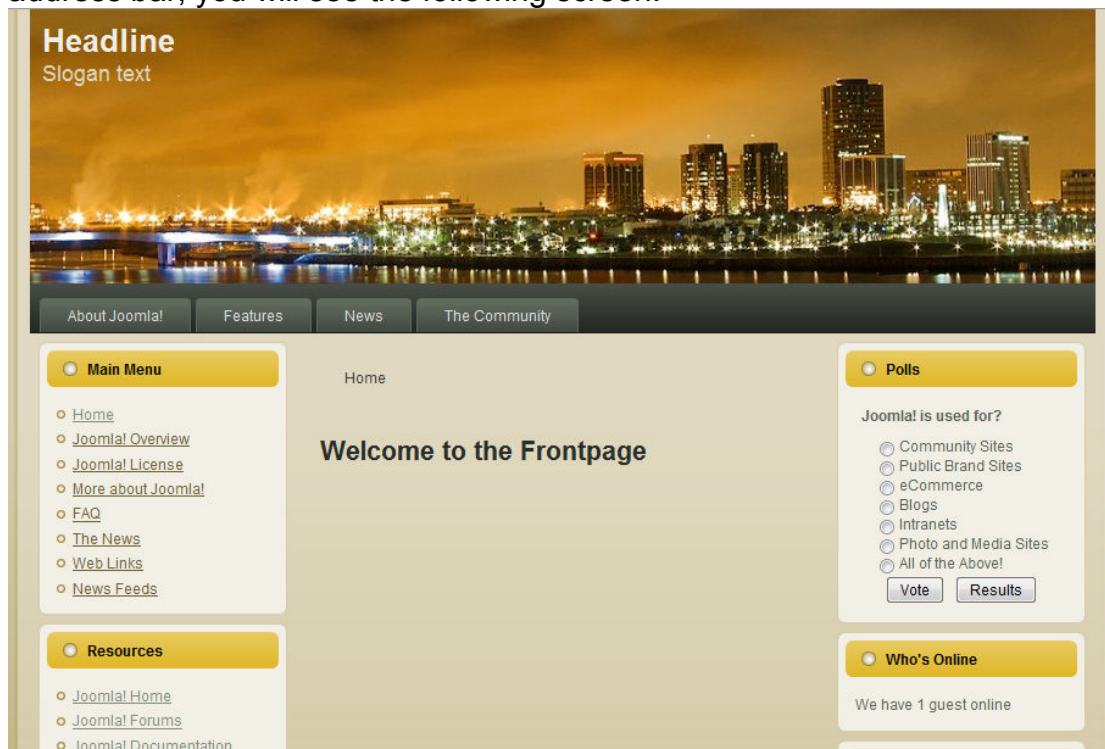
I have just shown you how simple it is to make changes to your Joomla system and website content, and you haven't had to know or write a single line of code. Isn't this a great way to create websites?

We'll sort out the menus shortly, firstly we need to add a couple of components.

Section 6 - Uploading new components

Ok, you now have your website up and it has no content. Now we need to extend the functionality of your website so that it becomes your local portal directory, and again, you're not going to write a single line of code.

So let's do it now.

If you are not in your back office, log back in now.

Hover your mouse over the top menu Extensions item and select Install/Uninstall.

You will see the same screen that you used to upload and install the template. That's one of the great things about version 1.5 of Joomla, you use the same interface to add and remove, components, modules and templates!
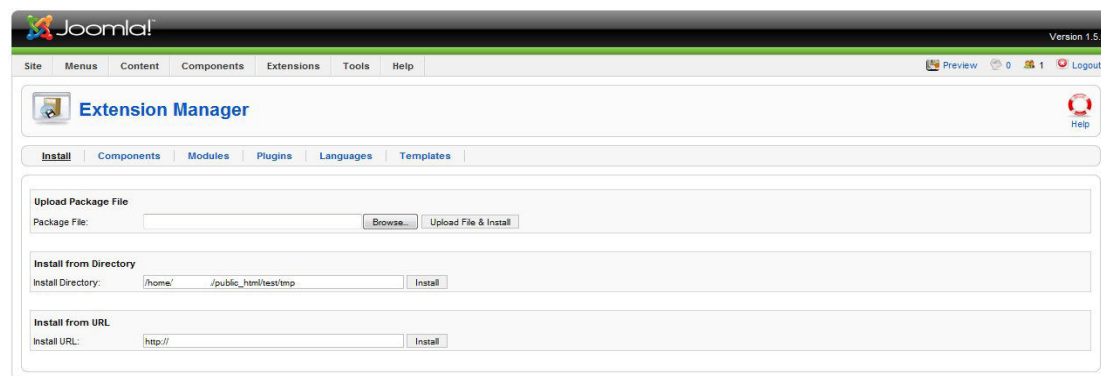
Click on the Browse button and when the file dialog box appears, navigate to your desktop folder that you downloaded the com_sobi component into.

When you have found the component, click on the dialog box open button, the path to the file will appear in the Package File field of the Extension Manager. Click on the Upload and Install button, and wait for the component to be uploaded and installed. When it does you'll see the following screen:
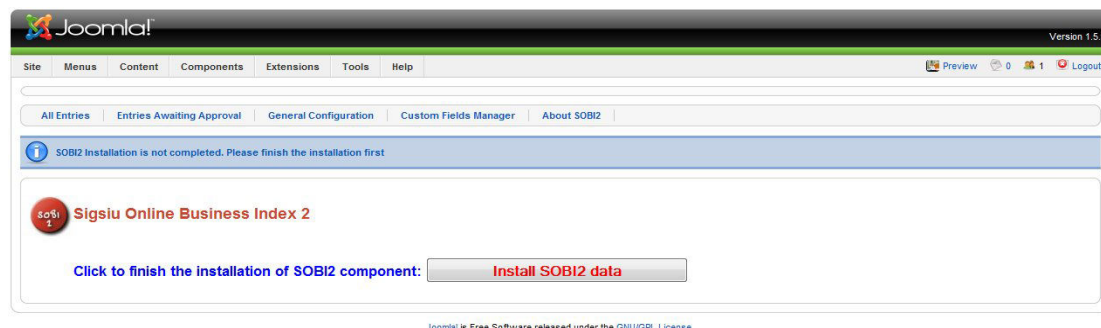
Click on the Install SOBI2 data button, to complete the installation.

When you do, a new screen will appear that will ask you to make a donation to the developers of the Sobi component. Obviously you do not have to right now, but I hope you will consider making a donation to these guys once your website starts making money for you, as without the hours that these guys have put in to bring us this component, we wouldn't be making money so cheaply; it's only fair!

Your new component is now integrated into your Joomla system but is not yet visible to the public, and is all ready for you to configure to your needs. You'll notice the description that appears, have a read, it tells you many of the features of SOBI2, and also where you can find help should you need it in the future. You don't need to inwardly digest this information because it is always there when you go to the component page inside Joomla.

Now let's upload the SEF component.

Again, hover your mouse over the Extensions top menu item, and click on Install/Uninstall.

As before, click on the browse button and navigate to the com_sh404 file. Click on Open to close the dialog box and return to the Install/Uninstall page. Click on the Upload File & Install button. When the component is up-loaded and installed, you will see the following screen:
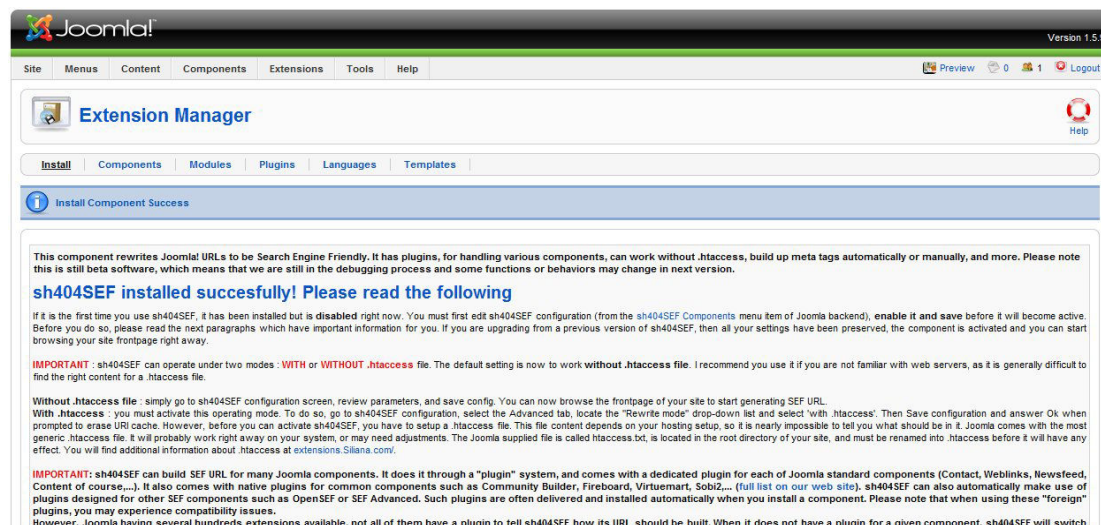
Ok, you now have the core Joomla system installed, the two main components that you need installed and are ready to start configuring your portal.

Section 7 - Configuring your portal site

This section is going to be a bit lengthy, as we are now going to change quite a few things so that your site looks and feels like a Portal site. Don't worry though, as before, all you are going to do is click your mouse, and enter a bit of data.

If you are not logged into your administrator back office, do so now.

Firstly then, let's remove the menus that you don't need.

Hover your mouse over the top menu item Menus, and select Menu Manager. Your screen will now look like this:
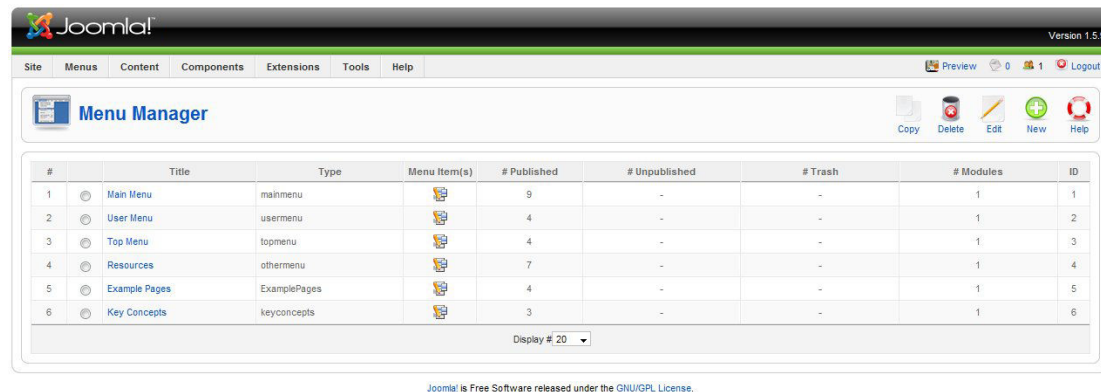
We're now going to turn off (unpublish) some of these menus. Tick the boxes to the left of the following items:

User Menu
Top Menu
Resources
Example Pages
Key Concepts

I'm afraid that you can only delete these menu, as you can't just unpublish them, but that isn't a problem as we don't need them. To delete them, click on the circular button to the left of the menu name. Once selected, click on the Delete button, in the top right menu. A new screen will appear asking you to confirm the deletion. Again, click on the Delete button, in the top right menu.

You'll have to repeat this process for all the menus you need to delete. In the end, the only one you will have left is the Main Menu.

If you now have a look at your website, you'll notice that there are still some items on there that we don't want right now. To remove the Polls item, on the right, hover your mouse over the Components menu item and click on the Polls link. You'll see the following screen:

Click on the check box to the left of the Joomla is used for? Item. Now you have a choice. You can either simply unpublish the item by clicking on the Unpublish button on the top right menu, or Delete the item totally; it's up to you!

To remove the other items that you don't need, hover your mouse over the Components menu item and select the Module Manager link. You'll see the following screen:

Tick the boxes next to the items Polls, Who's Online and Advertisement. Then you can click on the Disable button, in the top right menu, or Delete to remove them totally. It's up to you!

Now if you take a look at your site, it will look very bare! Something like this:
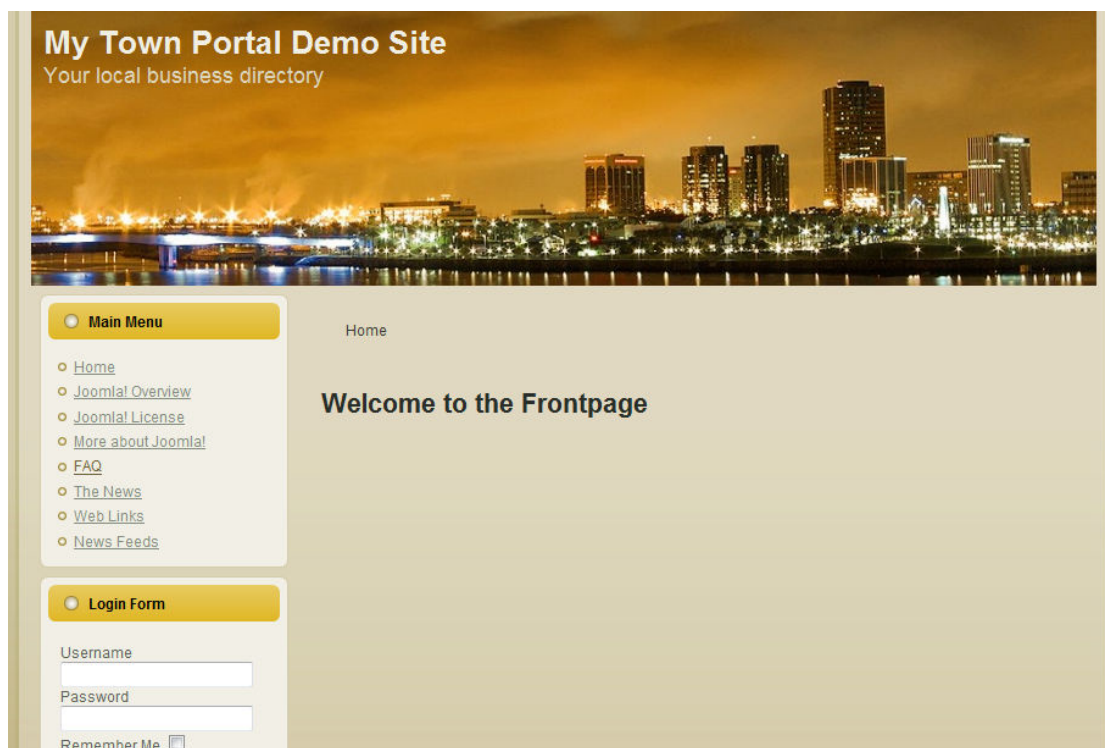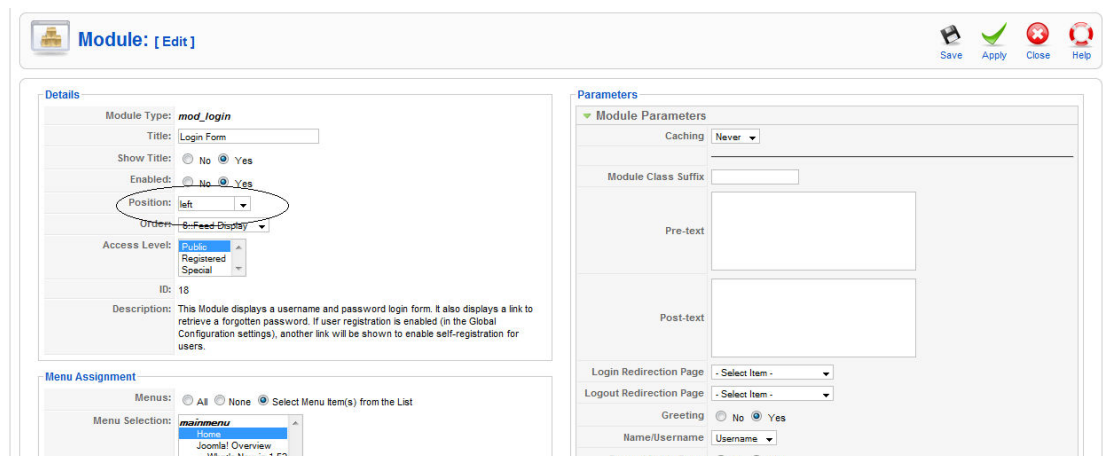
There are now only two menus, on the left, and all the others have been removed from public view. Leave this window open so that as we make changes, you can see them happening, when you refresh it.

Side Note: You may have noticed in the above screenshot that I have changed the heading and slogan in the header. The heading may depend on which template that you are using, it may automatically be set by the template, or you may have to do it manually. If you are using one of the templates that I have provided in your package, I'll show you how to change it once you have set up and configured the business directory component.

Personally, I don't like having the login form where it is at the moment, so let's move it over to the right side of the screen.

To move the Login module, hover your mouse over the Extensions menu item and select Module Manager. The list of installed modules will show. Click on the Login Form link. Your screen will change to this:

Click on the drop down menu next to the Position heading (circled above). From the list that drops down, select right. Click on the Save button, in the top right menu. If you now navigate to your website, you'll see that the login menu have moved over to the right side:
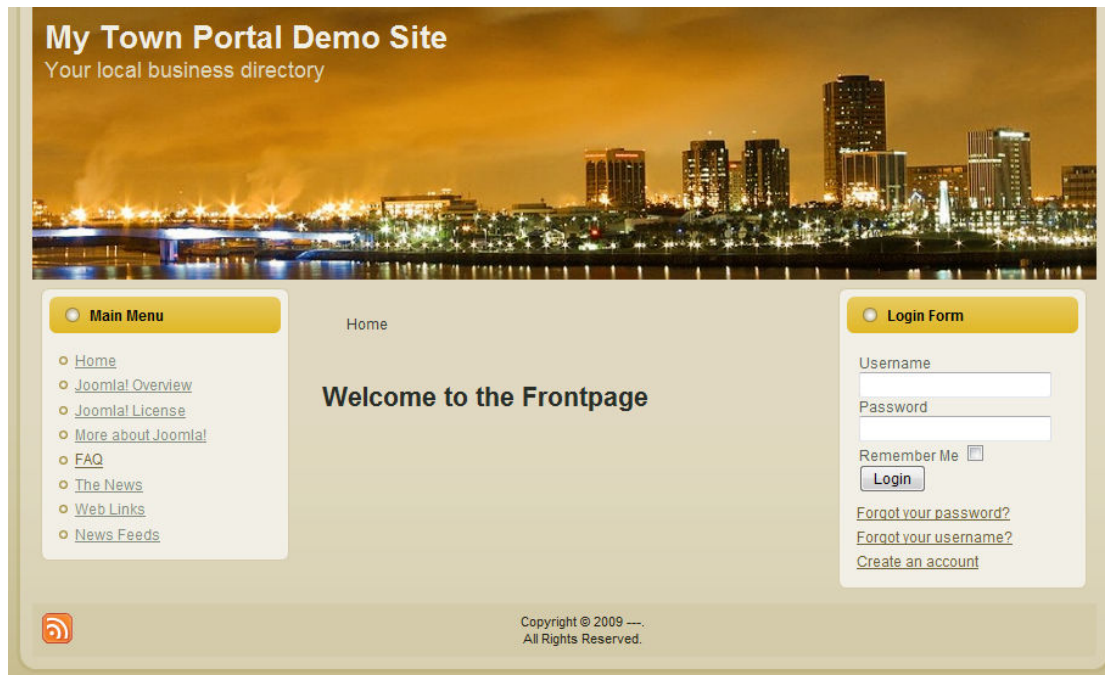
Ok, now let's remove some of the items in the main menu that we don't want visitors to see. By the way, in the Joomla system the Main menu itself cannot be deleted, it is the controlling module for all that is displayed in the main content area of your website. You can change the items in the Main Menu though. Also, the first item in the Main Menu (Home in this case) is always the first item displayed in the main content area, when someone comes to your Index page. I'll show you shortly how we can make it show the categories of your Portal.

Let's now remove the un-needed items in the menu.

Go back to the administration back office and hover your mouse over the Menus item in the top Menu and then select Main Menu. You'll see this screen:


Your screen will now be showing all the items that are in the main menu. Select all of the tick boxes except the Home item, and then unpublish these items by clicking on the Unpublish button in the top right.

All the items except the Home item will now have a red cross in the Published column signifying that you have removed them from public view. Remember though, these items are still in the database, because you haven't deleted them, just unpublished.

Now go back to the other browser window and refresh it, your website will now look like this:
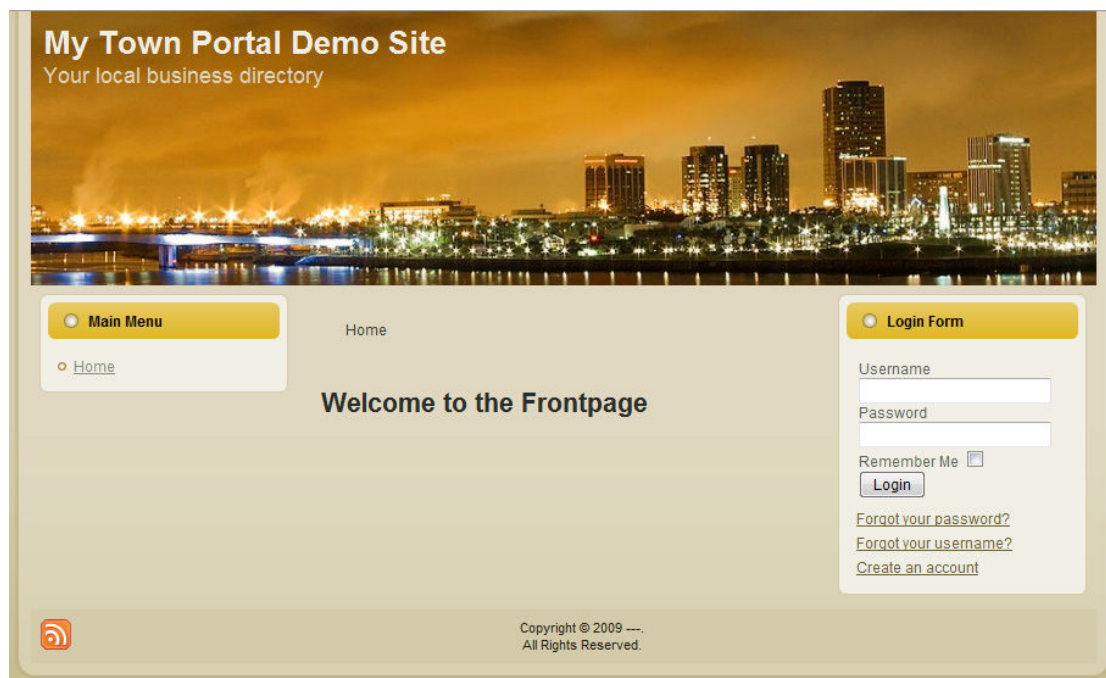
Your website is now looking pretty bare, so let's now add the business directory component, SOBI.

Firstly, you want the business directory component to display on the Home page of your website. This will show all the different categories that your customers can list their businesses under. But we have a slight problem in that the current Home page can't be changed to link to your business directory component, so you are going to create a new menu item that points to the business directory component, make that the default item for the menu and then remove the original Home item. Here's how.

If you are still in the Menu Items screen, click on the New button, in the top right menu. The screen will change to this:
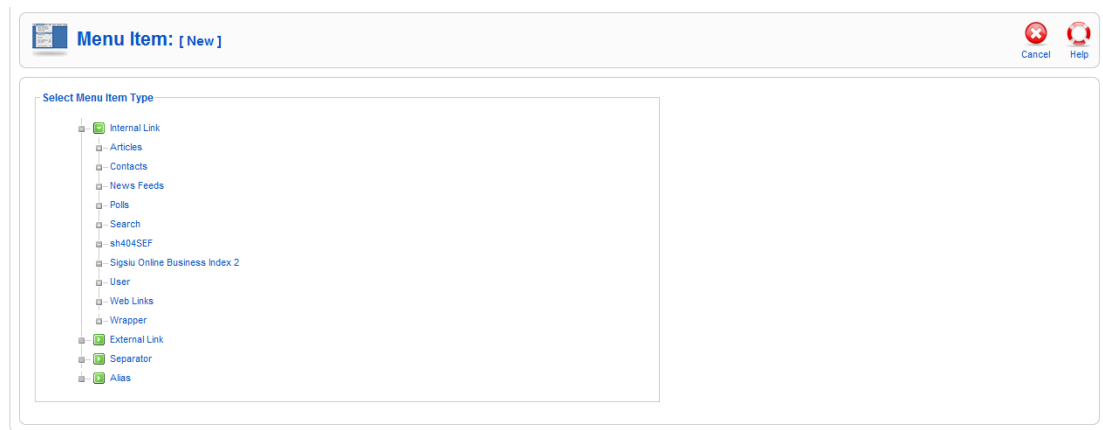
These are all the different kinds of menu items that you can create using the currently installed components. I am not going to go into any detail about all the different items here, because I want you to get your Portal website up and running as quickly as possible, and if I were to explain all these different items this book will be four times longer. In the resources section at the end of this book you will find links to sources of information about this and the Joomla system, should you want to learn more.

Ok, let's get on.

Click on the link Sigsiu Online Business Index 2. The screen will change to this:
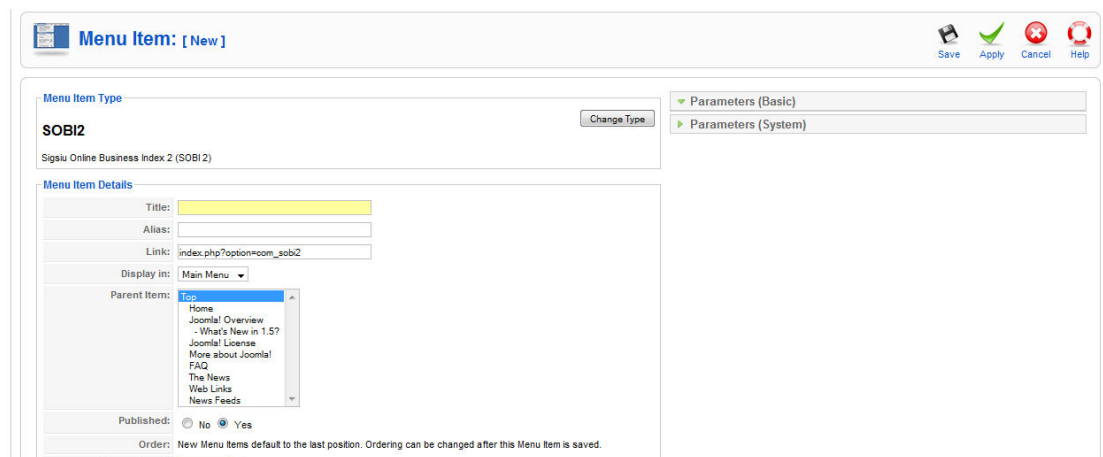
In the Title field, Type Home2. Each menu item should have a unique name, and as there is already a Home link, you can't use that. You will change Home2 to Home once you have removed the original Home link, bare with me.

Now over on the right you will see a drop down menu (with a green down arrow) named Parameters. Click on the green arrow. The menu will extend down. In the field named Page Title, enter a title for your portal, something like Your Town Business Directory. Leave all the other fields as is. Click on the Save button at the top right, to save your changes.

When you save your changes, the screen will go back to the Menu Items screen and you will have two Published items, Home and Home2. Now lets make the business directory appear on your front page.

Select the tick box next to the Home2 item and then click on the Default button in the top right menu. Now you can delete the Home menu item. Select the tick box to the left of the Home item and then click on the Trash button in the top right menu.

Now that the Home menu item has gone, you can change the name of the Home2 menu item to Home. To do this, if you are still in the Menu Items screen, click on the Home2 link. In the Home2 field, change it to Home. Your website should now look like this:
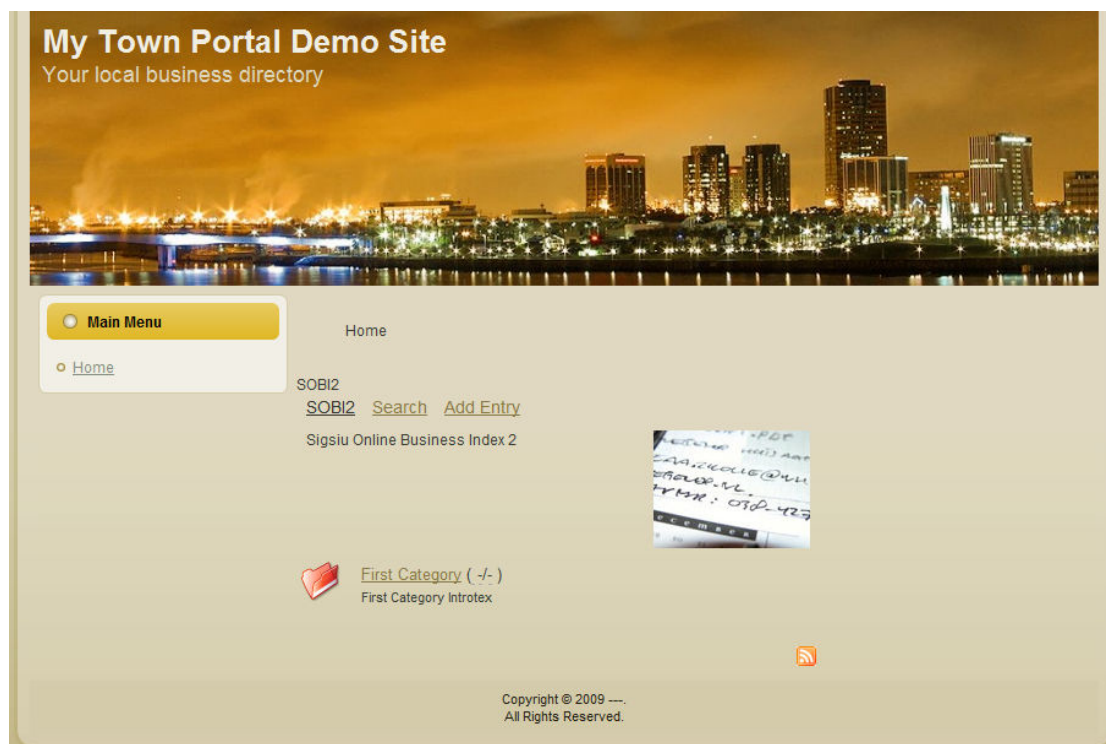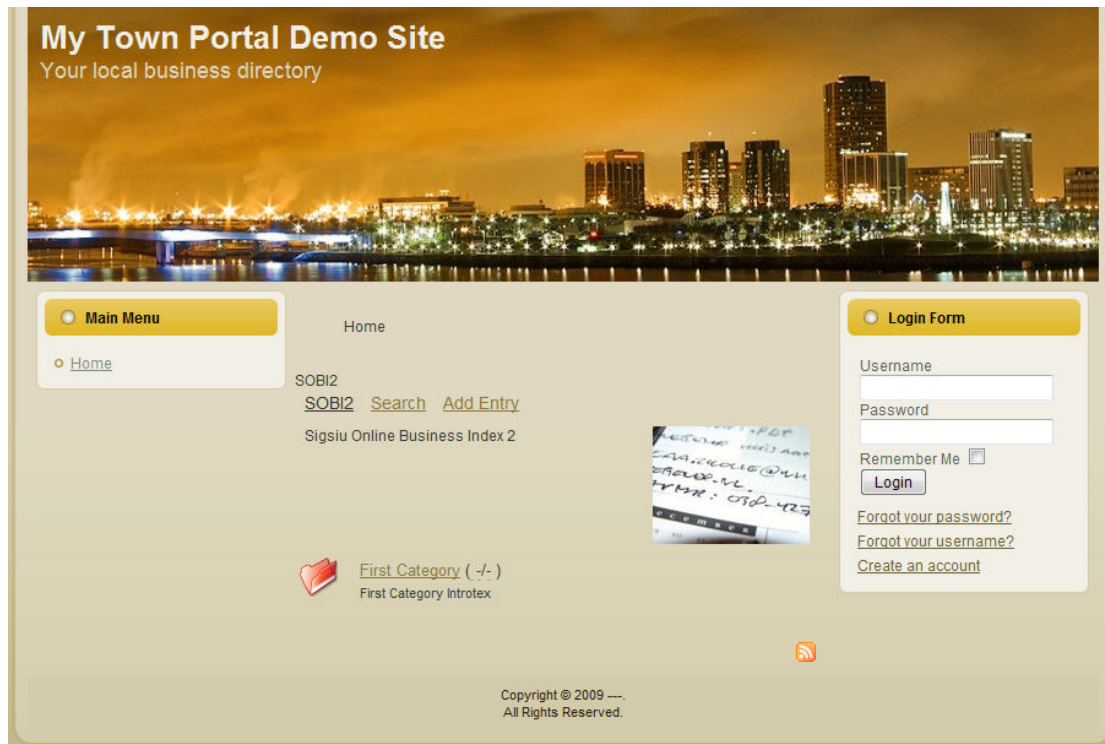

You now have your business directory component in the content area of the home page, which is what you want. I'll show you how to configure the component to show more categories and make it look a bit better shortly.

Side note: You may have noticed that the Login menu on the right side has disappeared.

Before you go and take a look at your website, let's just quickly sort out that Login Form that disappeared.

Hover your mouse over the top menu Extensions item and select Module Manager. The Module Manager will appear showing a list of the modules currently installed on your system.

Select the Login Form link. When the screen changes, in the area titled Menu Assignment, make sure that the circular button All is selected in the Menus field. Click on the Save button in the top right button bar, to save the changes. Your website page will now look like this:
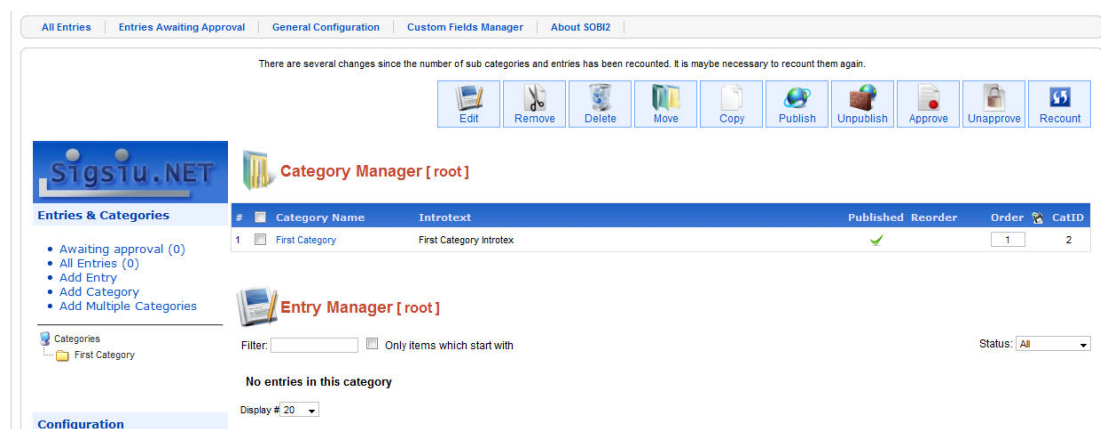

Ok, it's now time to configure your business directory component.

Configuring your Business Directory Component

In your administrative back office, hover your mouse over the top menu Components item, and select Sigsiu Online Business Index 2, from the list of options.

You'll see the following on your screen.

It's looking a bit empty at the moment, with only one category listed (First Category), but we'll add more categories shortly. Firstly you need to do some configuration. Click on The Configuration link Configuration on the bottom left of the screen(you may have to scroll down a bit), the left menu will change to show the list of options.

As you can see there are a number of options available to configure your business directory, some are more involved than others and I am only going to show you the minimum you need to configure your website as quickly as possible.

Once you have configured your websites business directory component, I would suggest going back in, when you have more time and have a look at what is available.

Here's what each option will do for you.

Custom Fields Manager: When a new entry is added to your business directory, the person entering the information is taken to an online form. You can control much of what is on the form through this option.

General Configuration: This option provides you with a number of tabbed screens that you can use to set the overall look and behaviour of your business directory, I'll talk more about this shortly.

Entry Configuration: This option allows you to configure things such as how many categories the business can be listed in. You can also allow/disallow images such as company logos, and you can set a price for using images or additional categories.

View Configuration: With this option you can set what kind of user can view information in your business directory. You can also setup Google Maps in this option. As you want your visitors to see all the details of businesses listed on your website, there is no need to change anything here except if you want to use Google Maps to show the location of a business, you will need to get Google API key. I'll show you how to do that shortly.

Payment Options: This option is self explanatory, I'll talk you through setting this up shortly too.

Language Manager: The SOBI system can be run in several different languages. There are plug-in modules available at http://www.sigsiu.net, that you can use if you want to change language settings. Again, I would suggest you do not touch this until you get to know the system more.

Recount Categories: As you add categories, sub-categories and business entries, you will want to use this option so that your frontpage will show the number of sub-categories and business entries, as it is not recounted automatically.

Uninstall SOBI2: This is self explanatory.

Now that you have a better idea of what each option can do for your website, lets get started configuring it.

Click on the Custom Fields Manager Link. You'll see the following screen:

If you are in the US, then there is probably no need to change anything here. The only things that you may want to change are the names of the fields. To do that, just click on the Field Label and in the resulting screen, change the Field Label text box. I would suggest that you do not change the Field Name field, as this is used by the SOBI system.

Don't forget, if you make any changes here, click on the Save button in the top right corner of the screen, to make your changes permanent.

Now let's make some changes to the General Configuration. Click on the left menu link and you will see the following screen:

As you can see, there are number of tabbed screens across the top in this section. Let's change just the minimal amount of information, to get your website up and running as quickly as possible, you can always make further changes when you are more comfortable with how the system works.

Firstly, the Component Name field. If you go back to your website home page (type in http://www.yourdomain.com in a new browser), you will see that at the top of the main content area is the word SOBI2. Obviously you don't want that, so change the Component Name field to something like "YourTownName Business Directory". Click on the Save button, in the top right of the screen.

If you go back to your other browser window and refresh it, you'll see the following now:
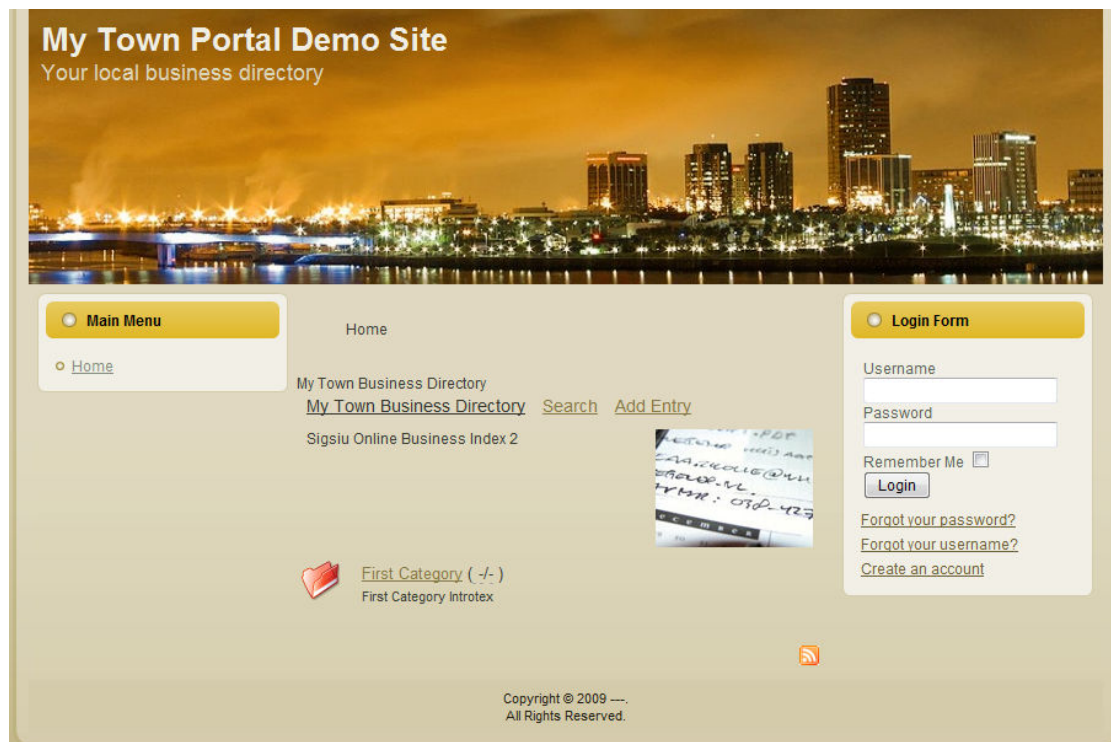
As you can see "YourTownName Business Directory" appears twice, which doesn't look too good. I'll show you how to sort that out in a moment.

Going back to your administration back office, in the General Options area of the General Configuration screen, I suggest you make the following changes:
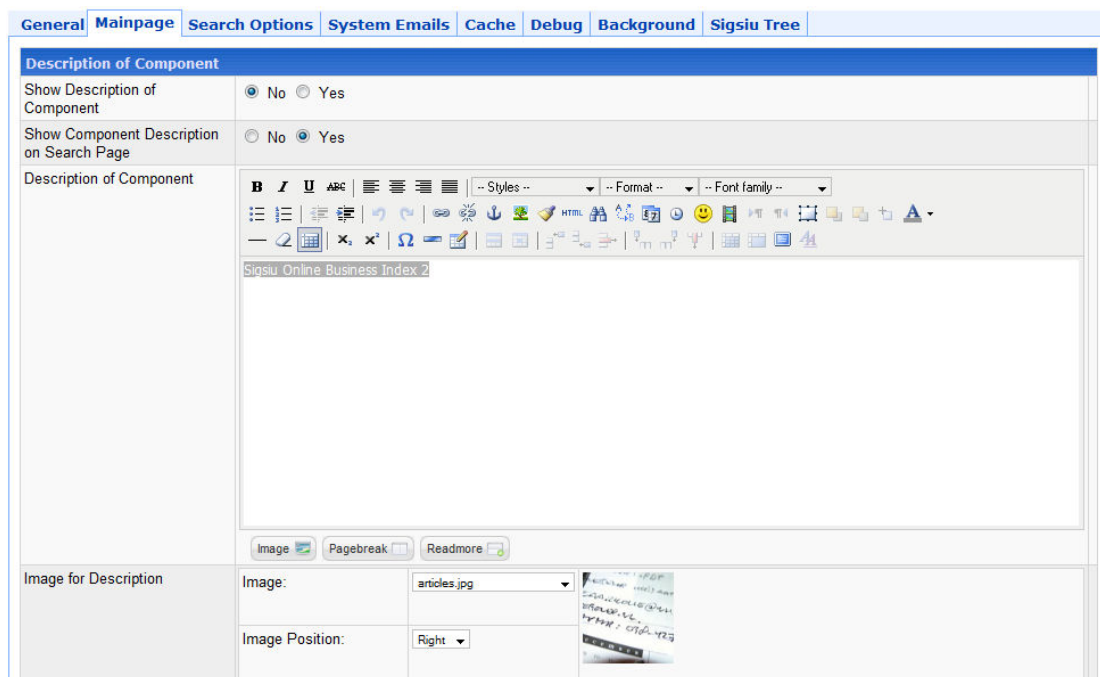
Set the Number of Categories in a Single Line field to 2, this will show categories side by side on the main page.

Set the Sort Categories by field to name ascending. This will show your categories in alphabetical order with A at the top left.

That's all you need to change in the General Options area. Now scroll down the page and you'll see a section headed SOBI Menu. Select No against Show Component Link, now save your changes and go back to your other browser window and refresh it. The only visible change at the moment is that the second entry of "YourTownName Business Directory" has disappeared. That was controlled by selecting No against the Show Component Link option.

Ok, we're getting there.

Now select The Main Page tab, you'll see the following:

Here you have a WYSIWYG editor and a few options. You can change the text in the editor to welcome your visitors to your website, and also use it to add some keyword phrases.

I would suggest you enter the following in the editor:

Welcome to YourDomainName.com, your local business and information directory for YourTownName and the surrounding area.

When you have written your introduction text, you can change the look of it, by selecting it with your mouse, and then using the buttons above the editor to change the font, color and alignment etc. Don't save it just yet though.

At the bottom of this page you will see a field Image for Description. If you recall, this is the image that you see on the right side of your home page. Personally I don't see a need for this image. To get rid of it, select the dropdown box in the Image: field and select the - Select Image - ▼ option. Now Save your changes.

When you now go back to your website home page you should see the following:
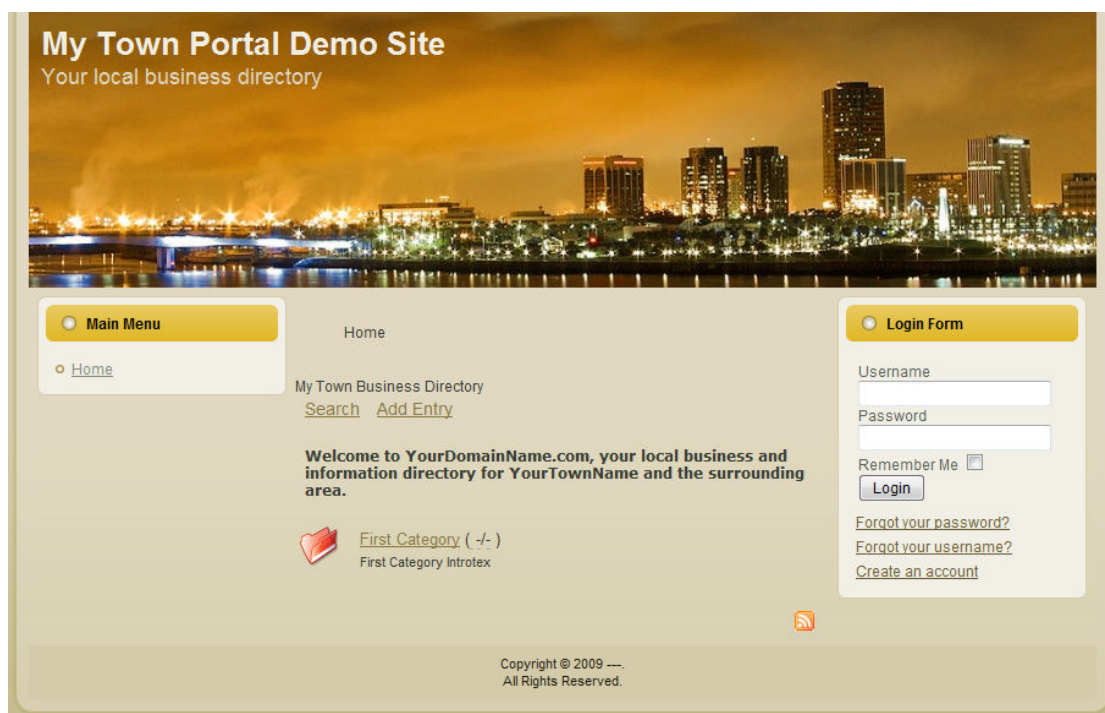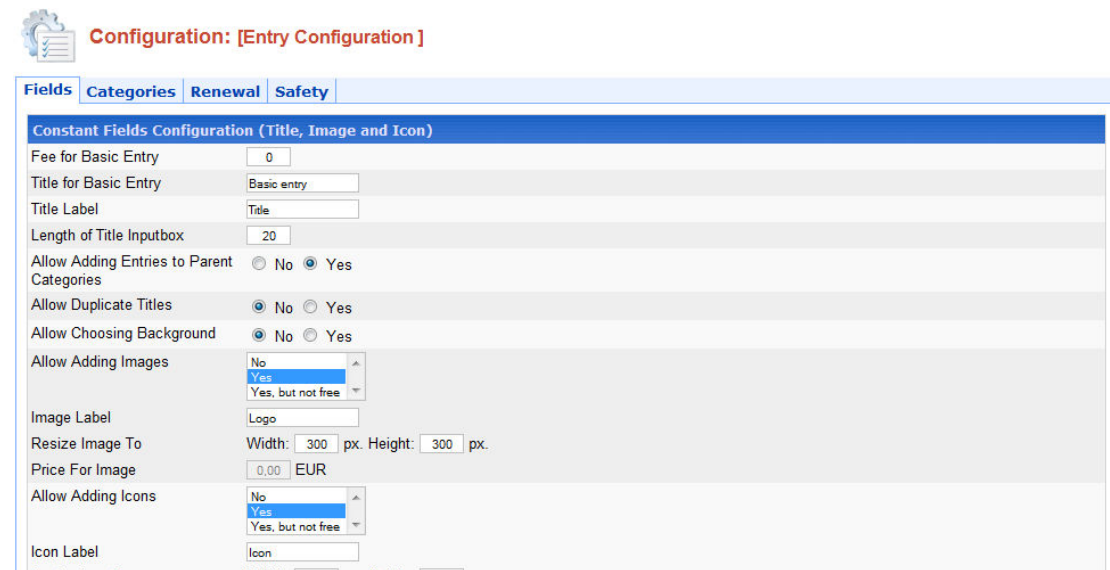
If you want to change the style of the description, you can use the buttons at the top of the editor. Before you do us the buttons though, write your text and then select the part of the text that you want to change. Then use the buttons to change the color and style of the selected text; it's a bit like using Microsoft Word, or Open Office!

Ok, we've now set up the General Configuration. There is no need to change anything on any of the other tabs there, at this time at least. You may want to make some changes later, but for now, you don't need to.

Side Note: If you want to know a bit more about what is meant by a field, hover your mouse over the fields title. When you do, a small pop-up window will appear that will give you a bit more information about the field and what is required.

Next, click on the Entry Configuration link in the left hand menu. You'll see the following screen:

As I have already mentioned, in this screen you can set various parameters that govern how new entries are added and whether or not you are going to charge for an entry in your business directory. You can also set how long an entry is shown on your website.

On the Fields tab you'll notice that the first entry is Fee for Basic Entry. You can set this to whatever you like. If you are going to allow free entries, leave it set to zero. If you are going to change for entries, then set the amount based on either a monthly subscription or a yearly subscription (we'll change that in a moment).

The next six fields can be left at their default settings.

If you want your clients to be able to add images, such as their company logo, you can specify the maximum size of the image and a price for using an image. I would suggest that you do charge a small amount for images for two reasons, 1) They use up your valuable storage space and 2) They increase your bandwidth usage. You can charge for images by selecting "Yes, but not for Free", in the two lists provided.
When these are selected, the business directory system will automatically add any charges you specify, to the total amount payable, when a client adds an entry.

You can also allow your clients to add an icon image and again, specify a maximum pixel size and a maximum file size. I would suggest keeping the Max. Size of Uploaded Files to 40 kB or Less. This will ensure your pages don't take too long to load on lesser speed Internet connections.

Once you have made your changes to this tab, click the Save button to save your changes.

Next Click on the Categories tab, you'll see the following screen:

Here you can specify how many categories a client can list their business under. You can allow up to 5 categories and you can either allow all 5 to be free or charge a small amount for additional categories, it's entirely up to you.

Once you have made your changes click on the Save button at the top right of the screen. As with the Fields tab, the business directory system will automatically add the cost of any additional categories to the total when the client completes the entry process.

In this screen you can set how your clients can renew their entries in your directory. If the Allow Renewal field is set to Yes, your clients can do the renewal process themselves, without you needing to have any input. The other options are fairly self explanatory, remember you can hover your mouse over the field Title to find out more about the field.

Finally (for this section) click on the Safety tab. You'll see the following screen:

When a client clicks on the Add Entry link, on your front page, they are taken to the Entry form. At the bottom of the form, there is a "I accept the Terms of Use of this site" link. This will take the client to a different page where they can read your terms of use.

The above tab allows you to configure the "I accept the Terms of Use of this site" link.

The Client has to accept your terms of use before continuing. If they don't, they don't get listed! You can set the URL of the page where your terms of use are, and you can even change the text that is shown. The terms of use page could be in the Joomla system, or outside it, it really doesn't matter.

If you're not sure what to put in a terms of use page, do a Google search for the term "Terms of Use", you'll find many examples that you can take ideas from. Please do not copy them directly though, you could get into trouble with copyright infringement.
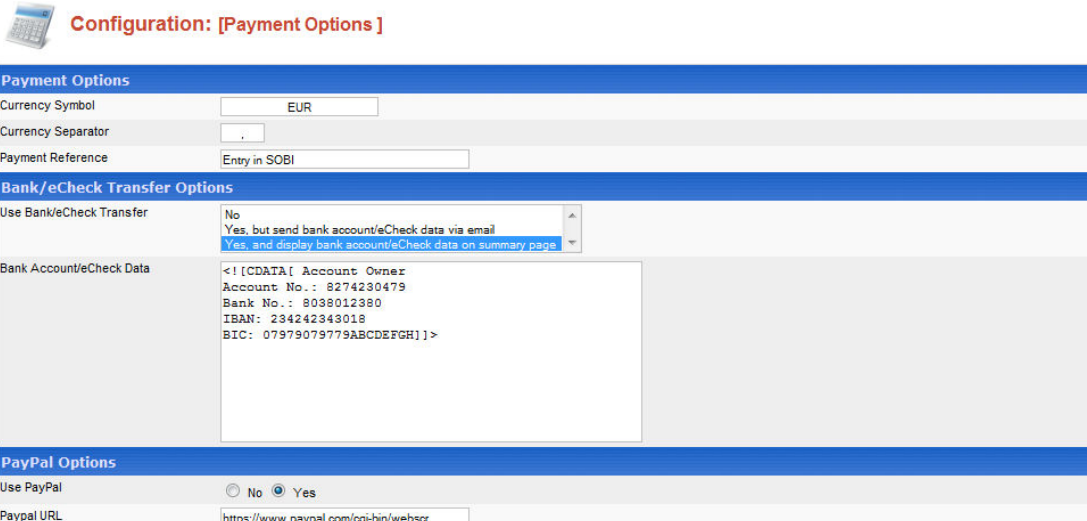
Next notice the field Stop Publishing After. Here is where you set how long you allow your clients to have their business details in your directory. If you are charging a monthly subscription, and you set this field to 30 days, and if your client doesn't renew their subscription, the SOBI system will automatically stop publishing that clients details.

You can set this field to whatever you like. If you are offering monthly subscriptions set it to 30 days, if you are offering yearly subscriptions set it to 365 days.

Further down the above page you'll see the final section is titled Safety Code. If this is selected, a Captcha image is shown that makes your client type a code into a text box at the bottom of the entry page. This is to prevent automated submissions and I highly recommend that you leave the default settings.

Don't forget to click the Save button, to save any changes you have made.

The next item in the left hand menu is View Configuration, I'll come back to that in a moment, for now please click on the Payment Options link. You'll see this screen:

This screen allows you to set the currency of you website. If you are in the EuroZone, you can leave the first field as it is. If you are in the US you can set the first field to USD and if you are in the UK you can set it to GBP etc.

If you are not sure what code to use for your country, go to http://www.xe.com/iso4217.php where you'll find a list of country and currency codes.

You can also decide whether you want to be paid into a bank account or into a PayPal account. If you want to be paid into a Bank or eBank account you need to fill in your account details in that field.

If you want to be paid into a PayPal account, make sure that Yes is selected and fill in your PayPal email address. You can also specify a return URL, which your client is directed to when they have completed payment at PayPal. You can leave the Return URL as default, which is the front page of your website, or you can set up a thank you page and enter the URL of that to the Return URL field.

Don't forget to click the Save button in the top right of your screen to save your changes.

Ok, it's now time to go back to the View Configuration link in the menu on the left of your screen. Click on it and you'll see this screen:

You can leave the General tab unchanged, the items here just control what is shown in the Details view of a company. So please click on the Google Maps tab.

A little explanation is required, about Google Maps.

When a visitor to your website clicks to view the details of a company listed, you can set the above tab up to show a "Waysearch" link. This link takes information about the companies address (from your database) and opens a new window showing a Google Map pointing to the location of the company. It's great for your visitor, because they will know exactly where to find your clients company.

But, to use Google Maps, you will need a Google API Key. To get one you will need to go to http://code.google.com/apis/maps/signup.html and create an account. That page also explains more about Google Maps.

Once you have signed up and logged in, you can copy the API Key from Google, into the API Key field of the tab shown above. You will also need to set Show Google Maps to Yes. Don't forget to Save your changes.

Next you need to configure the Way Search Options. Click on the tab and you will see the following:

Configuration: [View Configuration]

General | Google Maps | Way Search Options

Way Search Options

Show Link to Routing Site	○ No ⦿ Yes
URL to Routing Site	http://maps.google.com/?ie=UTF8&hl=de&q=STREET+ZIPCODE+
Link Text	Waysearch

Such an URL normally looks like that:
http://route.com/index.php?tocity=samplecity&toplz=12345&tostreet=sample%20street%2099

The following variables are available:

- STREET - street
- ZIPCODE - postcode
- CITY - city
- COUNTRY - country
- FEDSTATE - federal state
- COUNTY - county

To get an URL as stated above, the link must look like:
http://route.com/index.php?tocity=CITY&toplz=ZIPCODE&tostreet=STREET

Field Assignments

The default language that is used using the installed settings is German. Meaning that if a visitor clicks on a Waysearch link, the Google Map that is shown will have text links that are in German. If you are not in Germany this obviously needs changing.

To do that, look at the URL to Routing Site link field. As you can see, after the domain name there is a whole load of other information that is being passed to Google Maps. Part of that is the code "hl=de". This is the code that tells Google Maps to use German in all the text links.

To change it to English simply change the "de" to "en". If English is not the langauge you need then change that two letter code to the international two letter code for your country.

Finally on this tab, instead of using the word Waysearch, I think it is better to use "Location Map", it means more to more people. To change this, simply change the Link Text field to Location Map. Save your changes by clicking on the Save button in the top right corner of your screen.

And that's it for the Entry Configuration.

Finally, for setting up the SOBI component, click on the Templates & CSS link and then Email Templates link in the left hand menu. You see the following screen:

Configuration: [Email Templates]

Email Texts

Select Email Template to Edit: select ▼   Placeholder description   Save

When you click on the down facing arrow, the dropdown list will show you a list of the default emails that are sent out by the Joomla system, when a clients creates an entry in your portal.

These emails are sent at various times during the entry and approval process. The only email template that you really need to change is the Email Signature. To do this, click on the down arrow followed by Email Signature. A new editor opens with the default entry, Company Name, Company Address, Company Email. I would suggest that you change this to something like:

Yourname
http://www.yourdomain.com
email: info@yourdomain.com

Your local business directory

Obviously you can add what you like here, but this kind of signature will help clients remember you and your website.

The thing to remember is that the Email Signature is appended to the bottom of all the other email templates, that is why it is the most important.

The other links in the dropdown list don't really need any changes, unless you want to. But, here is an important point to remember, If you look in any of the other links, you will see that there are some words in curly braces ({}). These are system placeholders and you should not change them unless you know exactly what you are doing. You can see more Placeholders by clicking on the Placeholder Description link.

If you do make any changes, don't forget to click on the Save button.

So now you are done setting the basic configuration of your business directory software. Although it is slightly long-winded, you still haven't had to write a single line of code, have you?

You're now on the home straight, there are only a few things left to do.

Adding Categories

At this point you should still have your administration back office open and have the Sigsiu Online Business Index 2 component configuration screen open.

On the left hand menu, just below the Sigsiu.net logo, click on Entries & Categories. You'll see the following screen:
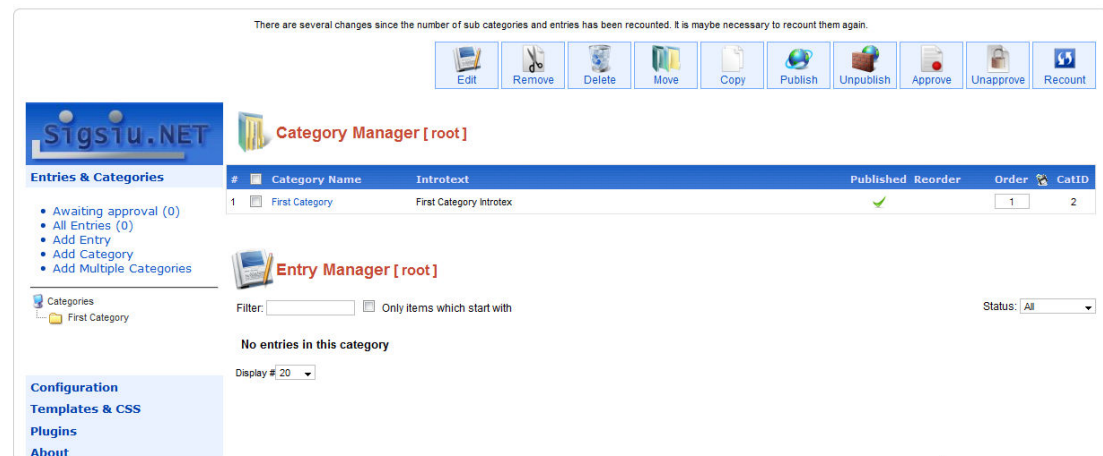
As you can see, there is only one category shown, which is an example category installed when you installed the component.

Side note: As I don't know where you live, what kind of businesses and how big a market there is in your area for this kind of service, I cannot tell you what categories you should have on your website. What I will recommend is taking a look in your local phone book or Yellow Pages and see what categories they are using. You can just create the same categories on your website.

So your next task is to enter some new categories for companies to list their businesses under. You will also want to add a bit of introduction text so that when a visitor to your website clicks on a category link, they know what to expect on that page. Also you can use this introductory text for Search Engine Optimisation purposes.

The problem with adding categories is that it is time consuming, depending on how many categories you are adding. However, you can add multiple categories at once, with Intro text and image file name by using the Add Multiple Categories link in the menu. I'll come back to that in a moment, first I'll show you how to set up a single category.

Click on the Add Category link in the Sigsiu menu on the left. Your screen will look like this:
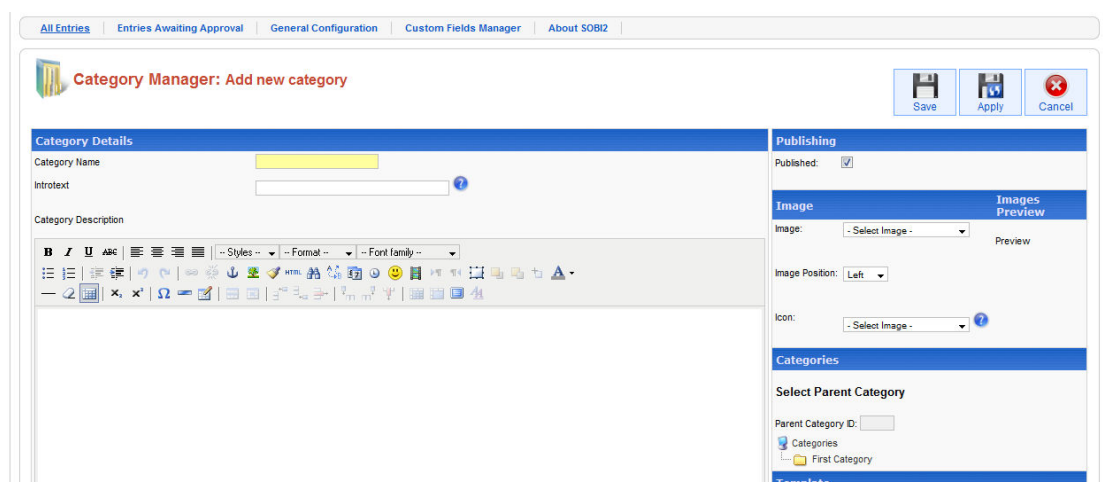
Enter your Category name, for instance Accountants.

The Introtext is displayed below your category like the following image shows.

First Category (-/ -)

First Category Introtex

If you don't want to have any Introtext shown, as above, simply don't enter any.

Personally I prefer it without the Introtext, but it is entirely up to you.

Next, in the Editor you can enter an Introduction text, that is displayed when the visitor clicks through to a category. You can use this for SEO. So, for instance if you are creating an Accountants category, you could write:

Accountants in the YourTownName area

On the right hand side of the screen above is a separate configuration menu for this category.

Leave the Published tickbox ticked, as you do want to show this category.

The Images section needs a little explanation.

The dropdown box, next to the Image title, is used to select an image that will be displayed next to your introduction text. There are about 30 default images mostly, different colored folders. When you select an image to be displayed and a visitor clicks on a Category, they will see something like the following at the top of the Category view:

YourTownName Business Directory

Search   Add Entry

This is the First Category Description that you can use for SEO purposes

Again, personally I don't like this, as you will have to go into CSS to get the text away from the image and it doesn't really help with your websites SEO.

So I would leave this dropdown box set to – Select Image – so that no image is shown.

The Icon field in the Add Category screen is shown in the front page category list. The red folder in the following image is set by the Icon field:

First Category (-/-)

First Category Introtex
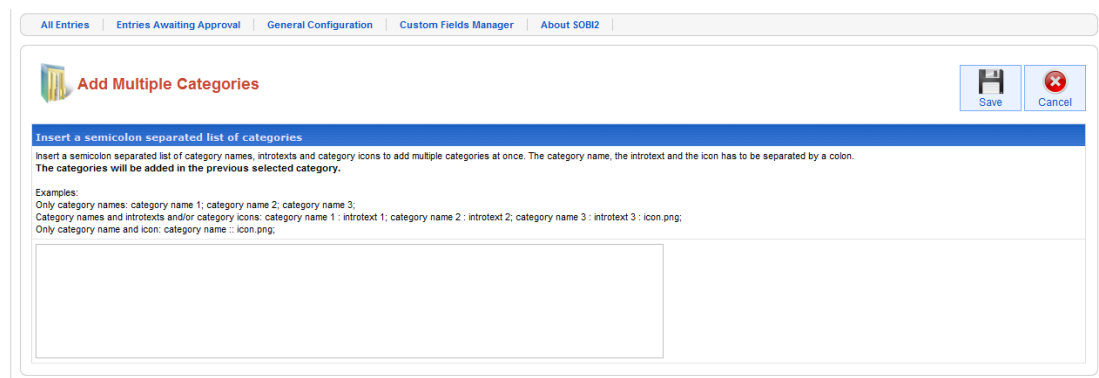
Again there are a number of images that you can use, and you can also add your own if you so wish, by uploading your icon file via the Media Manager, which is accessible through the administrator home page.

Side note: If you are wondering where the (-/-) are coming from in the image above, these show the number of subcategories and the number of entries in this category. You can choose not to show them in the General Configuration screen by selecting No in the fields "Count Entries and Subcategories" and "Show Entries of Subcategories".

So you have now entered your first category, don't forget to Save your changes. All you need to do is repeat this process for all the categories that you want in your business directory.

Adding Multiple Categories

By clicking on the Add Multiple Categories link you will see the following screen:

In the editor window you can add multiple categories all in one go. You can add just categories by typing in a list of categories separated by semi-colons ie. Accountants; Banks; Real Estate Agents and so on for all the categories you want to enter.

You can tell SOBI2 that you want to add Introtext and an icon by typing Category Name : Introtext : iconname.png; for instance Accountants : Accountants in YourTown : folder_green_open.png; Banks : Banks in YourTown : folder_green_open.png

There are two problems using this method 1) you still need to go back and change the text in the category view, for SEO purposes and 2) You cannot add subcategories. So, although time consuming, I would recommend creating Categories and subcategories manually.

If you choose to use this method, don't forget to click on the Save button in top right of the screen to save your changes.

For the purposes of this tutorial I have used this method to quickly populate my demonstration site, but as I have already said, I don't recommend it.

Add a Category list menu

When you have completed entering your categories, you website home page should look something like this:
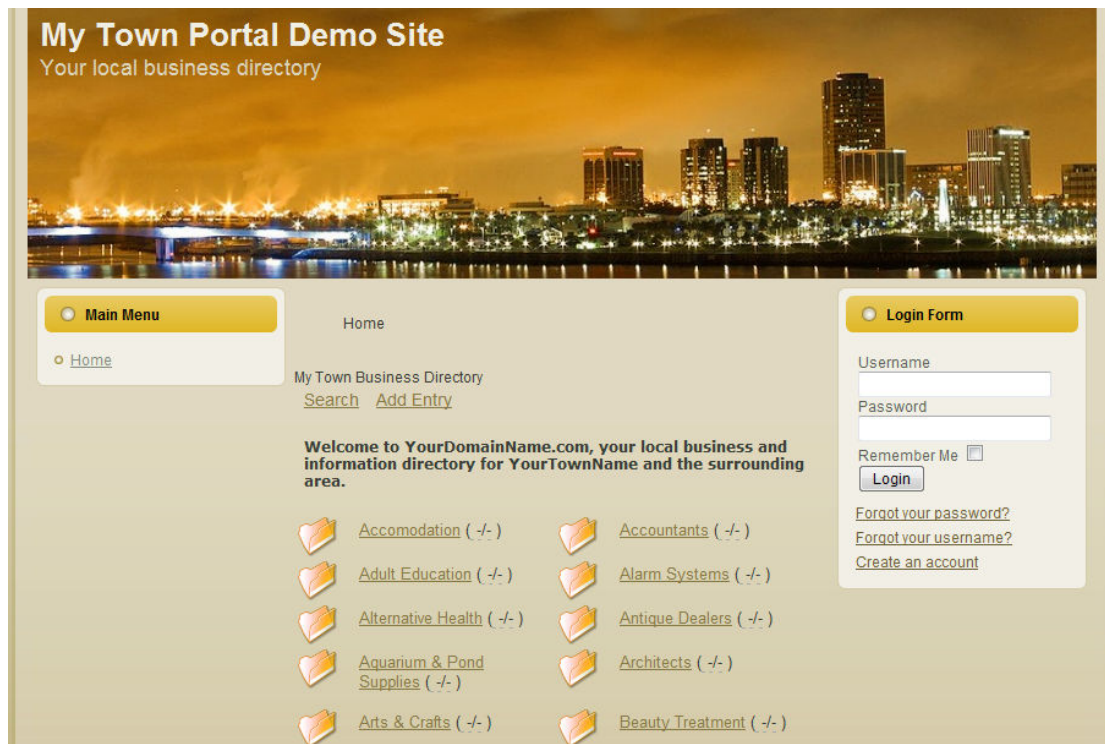
When a visitor clicks on a category from your home page, they are taken to that category and, as it stands, they will have to back track to the home page to see more categories. What I am going to show you now, is to place a menu under the Main menu, on the left, that will show a tree of your categories.

To do this you must first upload and install the Menu Module that you downloaded earlier.

First, hover your mouse over the top menu Extensions item and then select Install/Uninstall. You will see the Extension Manager screen.

Click on the Browse button, and in the dialog that appears navigate to your Portal Software folder on your desktop. Select the file mod_sobi2_menu_J15.zip and then click the Open button.

When the dialog box closes click on the Upload File and Install button
 . All being well you should see a success message.

To configure your new menu module hover your mouse over the Extentions menu item in the top menu and select Module Mnager.

You will be shown a list of all the current modules associated with your website. In the list you will see one called SOBI2 Menu Module, click on it to display the following:

This allows you to change a few parameters associated with this module. Change the Title field to Business Categories. Change Enabled to Yes. Change the Module Order drop down to 2:: Statisics. Over on the right set the Show Tree Icons field to No. Then click on the Save button in the top right of the screen.

Your new menu should now be visible with your previously created categories in it, like the following:
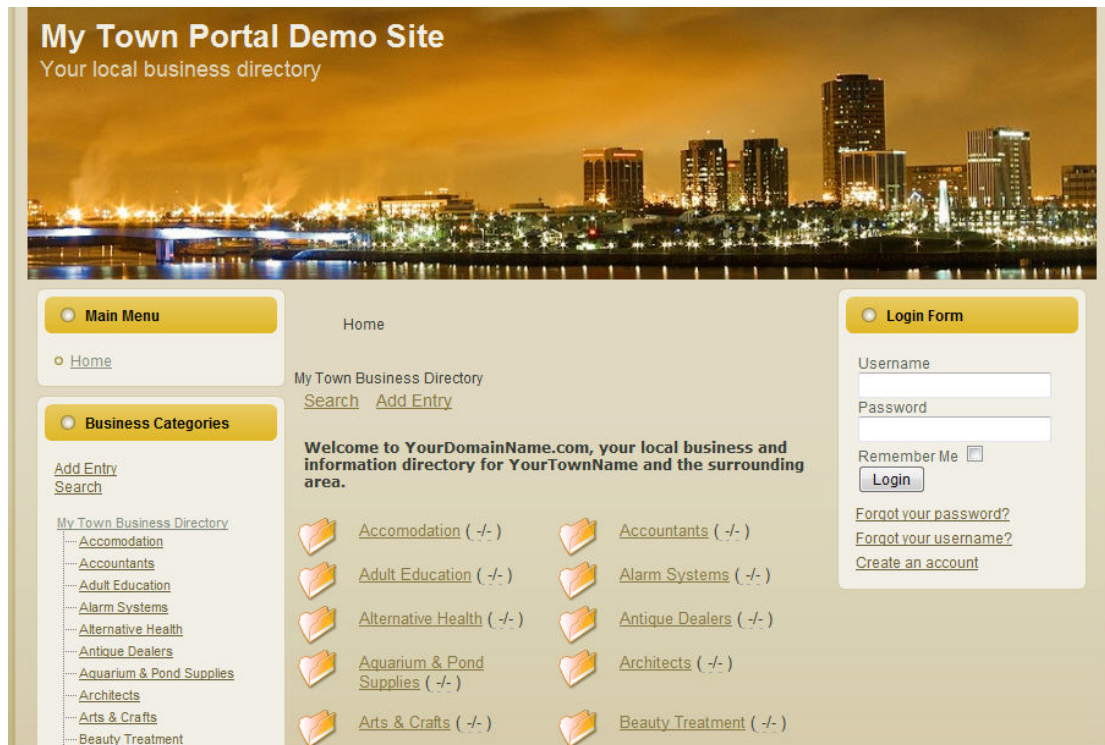
And that menu with your business categories in it will show on every page, so if a visitor clicks on a category, and then a company listing the overall categories are still there so should they decide to look under a different category they don't have to back track, they just click a category in the menu.

Your business directory component is now set up and ready to go. Your clients can add an entry themselves, and if they become registered users they can change their listing anytime they want, without it costing any extra, which it would do if they were using traditional advertising such as newspaper and magazines.

Actually, that is a very powerful selling point for your business directory, and well worth talking about when you approach business owners.

So our next task is to sort out some SEO issues and set some Global settings for your website.

Section 8 - Global Configuration

Changing the Headline and Slogan

This step may not be necessary if you are using either the default template or a template from some other source. However, if you are using one of the templates that I have provided with this package, then you will have to do this to change the heading and slogan at the top of your website.

To change the wording you will have to go in and change a bit in the HTML code, don't worry I'll walk you through it.

Hover your mouse over the Extensions menu option at the top of the screen, and select Template Manager from the dropdown menu.

Click on the circular button to the left of the title of the template you are using, then click on the Edit icon in the top right of the screen.

On the next screen, click on the Edit HTML icon in the top right. You will see this screen:

It may look a bit daunting to you, but really it isn't. Scroll down the page a bit and look for the word Headline in the code; I've circled it in the above screenshot. You can change the word Headline to whatever you want. Something like Your Town Name Business Directory, would be good for SEO purposes. Be careful not to change anything else on the line, only the word Headline.

You can change the slogan (circled in the image above) in exactly the same way.

Once you have changed the Headline and Slogan Text you can save it by clicking on the Save icon in the top right.

If you have made a mistake, taking out some of the code unintentionally, you can click on the Cancel icon to undo your changes, and then come back in from the Module Manager to start again.

Changing the Contact Us data

Some joomla templates have a contact us link automatically displayed somewhere on their template. This link will show information about the websites administrator, name, address, telephone etc.

To add you contact details, hover your mouse over the menu item Components and then hover your mouse over the Contacts option. A further menu will appear, click on the Contacts item. The following screen will appear.

Click on the Name link. A new screen will appear like this:

Enter your details in the fields provided and then click on the Save button. If you now go and take a look at your website, and click on the Contact Us link, you will see that the information now provided is the data that you entered.

Turning on the SEF Component

As it stands at the moment, when a visitor comes to your website and clicks on a category, the URL they see in the address bar of their browser will look something like this:

http://www.yourdomain.com/index.php?option=com_sobi2&catid=4&Itemid=27

which, I'm sure you'll agree, looks pretty awful, is totally forgettable and most certainly not search engine friendly. So let's sort that out now.

In your administration back-office, hover your mouse over the Components item and click on the sh404sef option. Your screen will change to this:
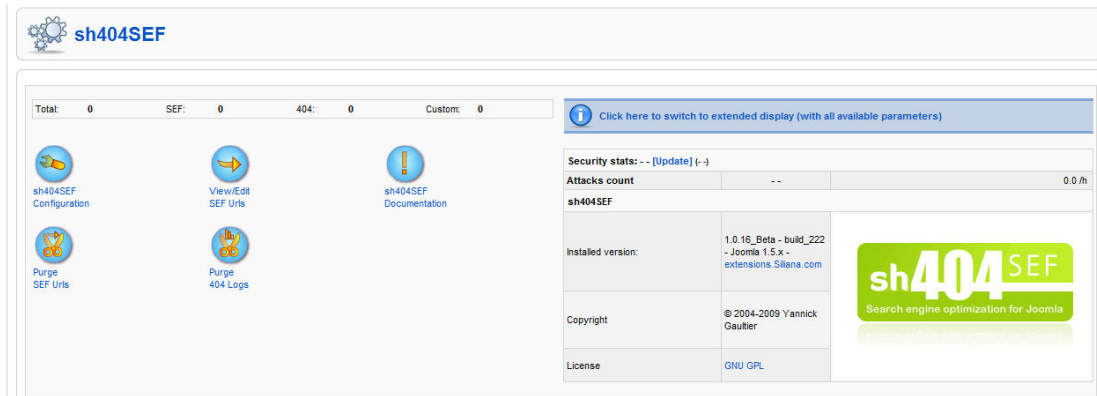
Here there are loads of options for configuring sh404SEF, but there is only one that you need to worry about at the moment. Click on the sh404SEF

Configuration button.

The screen will change to the following.
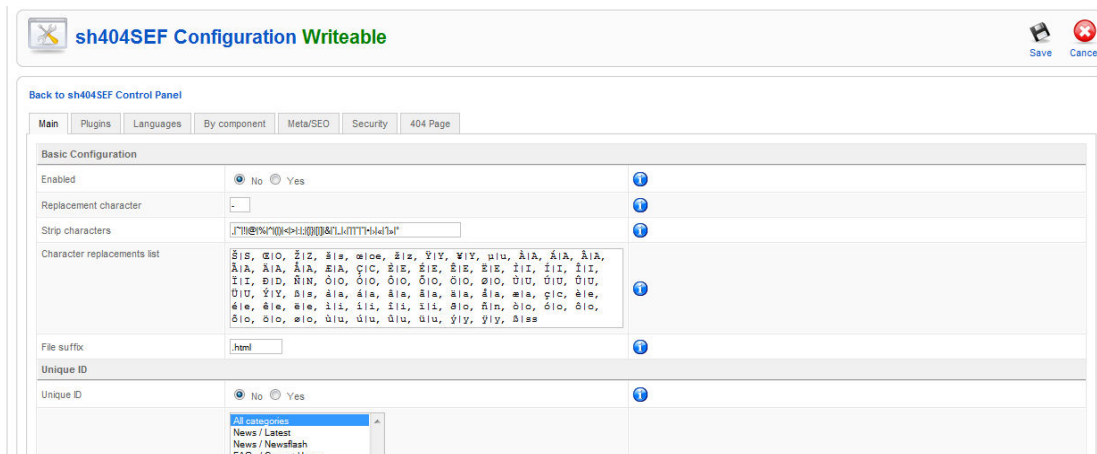
The only option that you need to change here is to set the Enabled? Field to Yes.

Now if you go back to your other browser and type in your website address, followed by clicking on a category, the URL in the address bar will look like this:

http://www.yourdomain.com/index.php/Accomodation.html

That is also the URL that the Search Engines will see too.

Changing the header image

This section only applies to you if you are using one of the templates that I supplied you with your purchase of this manual.

The header image is a great place to put a nice photograph of your town. Visitors will immediately see it and identify your website as an authority site for your town/city.

So how do you change the header image?

The easiest way is to create your image/edit your photo in a graphics package like Photoshop. If you don't have Photoshop you can get Gimp free from http://www.gimp.org/.
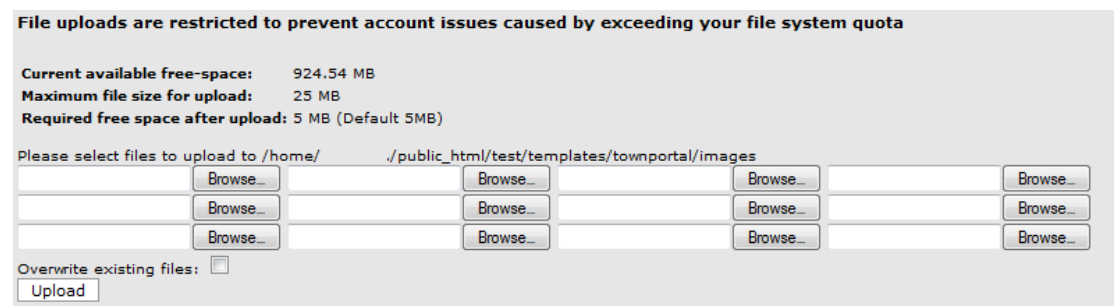
I'm not going to go into manipulating images here, but to replace the existing image, your new image needs to be 874 pixels wide and 225 pixels high.

Once you have your image created, save it to your portal folder on your desktop, giving it the name Header.jpg (it is important that you name it exactly like this, including the capital H. If you don't your image will not show in the header section without you having to go in and change the templates CSS file.

Once your image is ready, you will need to log back into your cpanel. When you have logged in, click on the File Manager and navigate by clicking on the folder icons to the following path:

/ public_html / templates / templatename / images where templatename is the name of the template that you are using.

When you are in the images folder, click on the button. Your screen will change to the following:

Click on the top left Browse... button. An open file dialog box will appear. Navigate to the folder you saved your header file in and select that file. Click on the Open button. The dialog box will close and the path to the file will appear in the text box.

Click on the Upload button, your new image will be uploaded to your server.

All being well, when you go to your browser and navigate to your website, your new header should appear at the top.

A bit about Banners

On thing that I haven't mentioned at all yet is the banner at the top of the page.

The banners can be used as a way of earning extra income from your website. If you were to join a few affiliate programs, and show banners for those program, when people click through and buy, you earn.

Alternatively, you can sell banner space to other website owners, the choice is yours.

The banners are controlled from two places. Under the top menu Modules item, select Site Modules. In the list that is shown, the first one is Banners. If you click on the link you'll get to see and change a number of parameters associated with where your banners are shown on the web page. Obviously if you set Published to No, your banners will no longer be seen by the public.

The other place that you control banners, is from the Component item in the top menu. If you have your mouse over this option, and then move your mouse to the right of the Banners option, you will see the Banner Manager option. Click on it and you will see the following screen.

Banner Manager

#		Banner Name	Published	Impressions Made	Impressions Left	Clicks	% Clicks
1		OSM 1		80	unlimited	0	0
2		OSM 2		81	unlimited	0	0

‹‹ Start ‹ Previous 1 Next › End ››

Click on the New button, in the top right button bar, and you'll see the following screen:

Banner: New

Details

Banner Name:	
Client Name:	Select Client
Impressions Purchased:	Unlimited ☑
Show Banner :	No
Click URL:	
Clicks	Reset Clicks
Custom banner code:	
Banner Image Selector:	- Select Image -
Banner Image:	

This page is fairly self explanatory, just fill in the fields as required. The only thing about this screen that needs an explanation, is where you get the banner image from, and for that you need to know about the Media Manager.

Media Manager

If you click on the Home item in the top menu, you will be taken back to the home screen where all the main options are. To see the Media manager, click on the Media Manager button.

You'll see the screen on the following page. Please note though, yours may have slightly different images and folders.
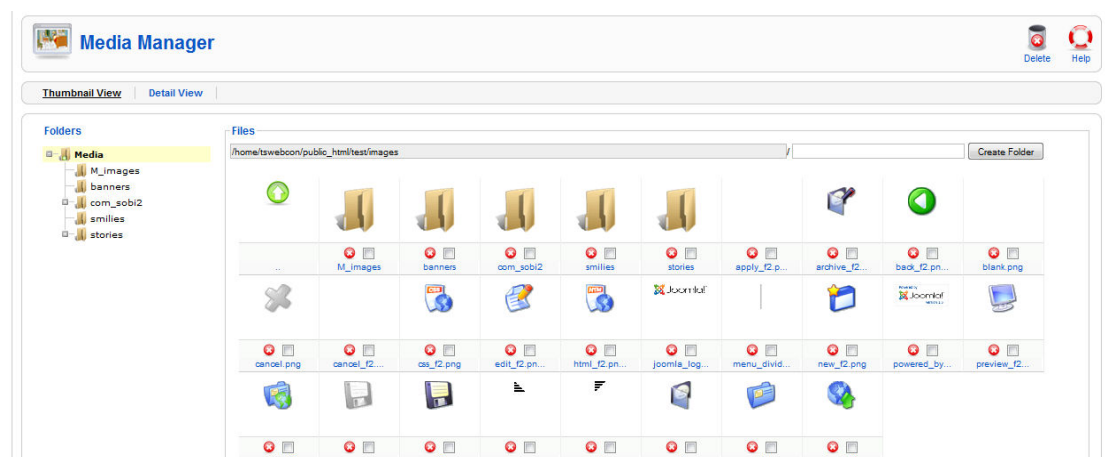
The Media Manager is intended to be the main storage area for your media files, such as images, videos, audio and video files.

Using the File Upload field you can browse to graphics on your computer and upload them to your Joomla system. You can also navigate around the folder hierarchy by double-clicking on the folders or using the small icon next to the Directory field to go up a folder level.

Going back to the banners in the previous section, any banners that you want to display should be uploaded to the banners folder. All the banners in that folder are automatically listed in the Banner Image Selector field of the New Banner screen in the previous section.

Testing your website

Your final task is to test your website is working correctly. In your website, click on the add entry link at the top of the page.

Enter test details in the form, making sure you fill in all mandatory fields correctly. In the email address, put in your own email address.

When everything is filled in and you have accepted your terms and entered the Safety code, your system will process the information. The screen will refresh with a "Your entry is awaiting approval message" and have a Paypal Pay Now button.

Check your email, there should be two emails, one to your administrator account informing you that a new entry has been added and one as the client telling you that your test entry is awaiting approval. This second email should also contain payment details and a PayPal link too.

Log into your administrative back office and select Sigsiu Online Business Index 2 from the Components menu. You should see that there is a 1 in the brackets next to the Awaiting Approval link. Click on that link and you will see the details you entered as a test.

In the top button bar, you will see there are several buttons, including Approve and UnApprove. If you are happy you can click on the Approve button and your test entry will become live. If you now go to another browser window and type in the address of your website, you should be able to navigate to your test entry category and then details view.

Obviously you don't want this entry to remain. To delete it go back to the back office and in the Sigsiu component menu select All Entries. You can then select the entry and delete it.

Conclusion

Well, there you have it, a fully functioning business directory that is pretty much all you need to begin your own Portal site. What is great about this method is that because the website is pretty much fully automated, you can spend most of your time marketing it to local businesses, instead of updating and modifying it with new entries.

Also, because of the way the Joomla system works, it is very easy to extend the functionality, with very little work on your part. For instance, you could use the blog function to create Latest Local News pages and such like. The possibilities are really only limited by your own imagination and the knowledge of how the various components work together to form your website.

Now that you have the basic website set up, and are getting your first clients, you can spend a bit of time looking through the resources section below to see how you can extend the functionality of your website, and with it your users experience.

The Joomla system is extremely powerful and may take you a while to master it, but when you do, you will open up a new world of opportunities for yourself.

I hope that this book has been easy for you to read and understand, if you have any questions about the set up procedure, feel free to contact me.

I wish you every success with your new Portal Site and your new Business.

All the best.

Tim Spencer
MyTownPortal.biz

Resources

Donations

The Joomla system is open source and has taken many volunteer developers around the world hundreds of hours coding, testing, retesting and recoding. It is a phenomenal task that can only continue if it is supported by these people.

The Joomla project is financed by voluntary donations from end users who appreciate the work that has gone into such a massive system.

When your website is making you good money, I ask you to consider making a donation to the project to help it's continuing development and refinement. They need your support.

On the same note, SOBI2 is provided free of charge and can only continue being developed and refined through the generosity of end users so please also consider making a donation to these guys too.

Joomla: http://www.joomla.org/content/view/689/79/

SOBI2: You can go to http://www.sigsiu.net/sobi2.html and click on The Donate button on the left side.

Other Resources

Joomla Forum: http://forum.joomla.org/ is a huge resource of experienced Joomla users who can answer just about anything Joomla related.

Joomla Extensions: http://extensions.joomla.org/ a comprehensive searchable list of hundred of components and modules to extend the functionality of the Joomla system.

Joomla Help: http://help.joomla.org/ the official Joomla help site, including documentation.

SOBI Forum: http://www.sigsiu.net/forum/ for questions and answers about the SOBI component

SOBI wiki: http://sobi2-wiki.sigsiu.net/directory/Main_Page is the official SOBI installation and documentation guide.

Marketing: To make your portal a success you are going to need to market it to make businesses aware that they can advertise on it, and to make the general public in your area aware that it exists.

There are many ways that you can market a site like this, but that subject is best left for other resources. Here are a couple that will help you.

http://www.localbizbuilders.com This is a special forum set up so that portal owners and offline business builders can help each other build their businesses. It is a great place with loads of helpful information and like minded folk. Check it out.

Marketing resources

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Imagine, If You Could Sell Your Online Marketing Services To Offline Business Owners Over & Over Again Like Clockwork!

And, Imagine If You Could Do This Today, Right Now, Whatever Experience!

http://www.mytownportal.biz/getsales

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