Forums in SAP NetWeaver Portal - Frequently Asked Questions

Questions

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Answers

Why does SAP offer new forums?

Due to the enormous success of discussion forums on SDN, SAP NetWeaver added the SDN-like forums to its own collaboration capabilities. Thus SAP also contributes to the growing need in community support.

Were the forums developed by SAP?

No: SAP NetWeaver Portal integrated the Jive Forums, a proven forum solution, which is already used as forum application in SAP Developer Network (SDN). Due to the enormous success of the SDN forums these forums were also integrated into SAP NetWeaver Portal.

What is the technology behind the new forums?

Forums are a 100% Java application that leverages server-side technologies such as Servlets, JSP, and JDBC. They are database independent through OpenSQL compliance.

Since when and on what releases are forums available?

Forums are available as of SAP NetWeaver 2004 SP Stack 20 and SAP NetWeaver 7.0 (formerly known as SAP NW 2004s) SP Stack 12.

How can I get the forums?

Forums are technically not part of a SAP NetWeaver stack: when you deploy SP Stack 20 or SP Stack 12/13, forums are not included automatically. Forums are delivered in two SCA files (Forum SCA and KMCUI Layer SCA) which must be downloaded from Service Marketplace (alias swdc: Download -> Support Packages and Patches -> Entry by Application Group -> SAP NetWeaver -> SAP NETWEAVER -> SAP NETWEAVER 04/2004s -> Entry by Component -> Enterprise Portal).

How can I install/upgrade the forums?

The installation procedures as well as the upgrade specifications are described in the PDF files attached to SAP Note 1049553. Information on specific steps in case of a system copy are also attached to this note.
Is there an additional license?

Forums are part of the SAP NetWeaver license, there is no extra pricing.

What is the relation between discussion groups and the new forums?

There is a co-existence of discussion groups and the new forums in the system. If existing customers already use discussion groups they can continue using them. However they should consider switching to the new forums especially if they plan to implement a new community scenario. If new customers plan to use discussions within SAP NetWeaver Portal, they should no longer use the "old" discussion groups, they should start using the new forums.

Customers should consider that the new forums offer an intuitive user interface and a broad range of forum functionality missing in the "old" discussion groups.

What are the main improvements in forum functionality as compared to the existing discussion groups?

Forums have a much nicer and more intuitive user interface and offer a broad range of forum functionality whereas the discussion groups offer very "basic" functions. Forums enable users to discuss common issues and topics, post questions and announcements to the community, escalate questions to experts, and get updates on posted comments. End users can also create draft versions of postings and vote in polls. Moreover forums also include extensive and easy-to-use moderation features such as content control by approval processes, by deleting or moving content and by closing discussions.

Is a content migration planned from the discussion groups to the forums?

A migration is planned in the feature scope but the delivery timeline is not finalized.

Are forums RSS-enabled?

RSS (Real Simple Syndication) is a way to make forum data available so that users can be notified when the data changes, such as when new posts are made. If you enable RSS, a user can choose to set up syndication of forum content to a personal homepage, a blog, or other website. They can also read the contents of the RSS data (known as a feed) in an "RSS aggregator," a tool that presents the data and links back to its source.

How are users informed about changed content in forums?

There are two ways: By subscription to a forums or by RSS feeds.

What features are coming next and in which stacks?

For the latest information read the forum blog at 5104.

Will forums be integrated into the collaboration rooms?

A standard integration into collaboration rooms will not be supported in the future. There are two how-to guides available on SDN describing a workaround for the integration of forums into collaboration rooms:

- SAP NetWeaver 2004 How-To Guide
- SAP NetWeaver 7.0 How-To Guide

An update on SAP NetWeaver Collaboration Service (including forums) can be found in blog 10932

What are the current limitation (known issues) of the forums application?

The current issues and limitation of the forums application are described in SAP Note 994576.