

AssetNow NX Mailing Lists (Newsletters)

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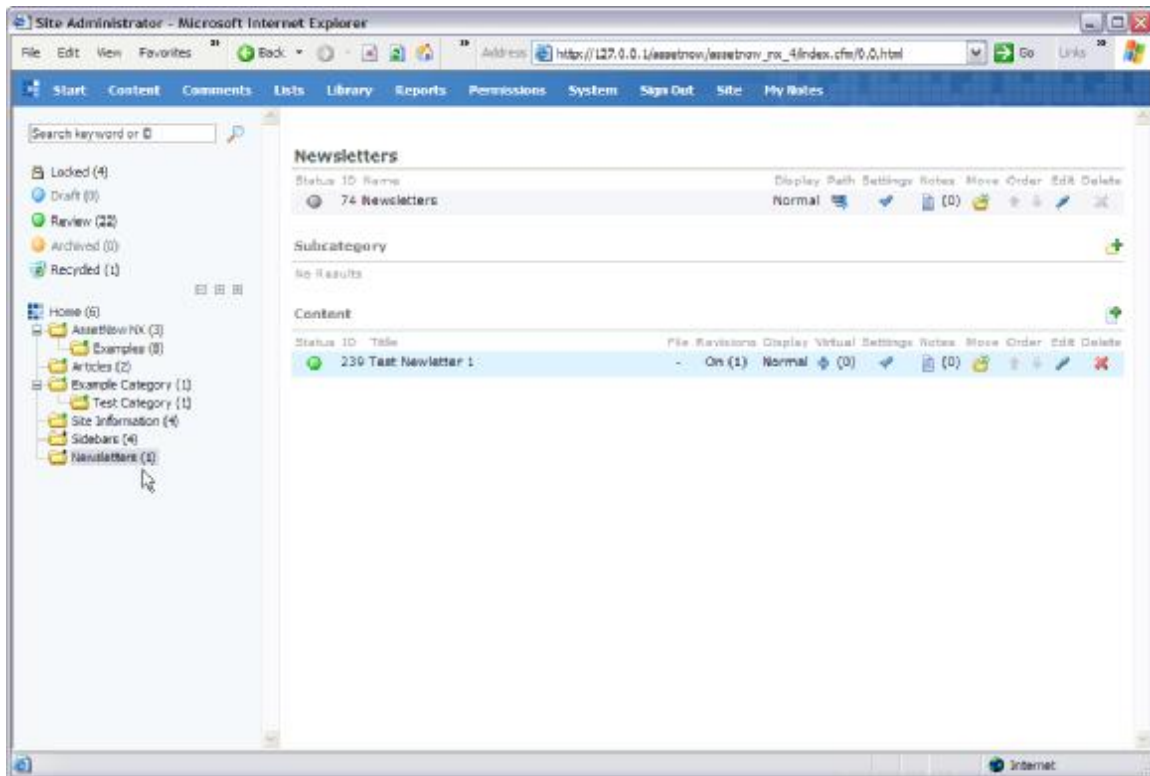
Date: March 17, 2007

Introduction

This document describes the list tool available in AssetNow NX 4. Lists allow you to send messages to subscribers. Lists are commonly referred to as mailing lists or newsletters. The AssetNow NX list tool allows you to manage any number of lists and subscribers. It also allows you to format plain text versions of the source X/HTML newsletter page. AssetNow NX provides automated subscribe, subscriber verification, unsubscribe, returns (bounces), and click tracking.

Step 1: Create a Newsletter Category

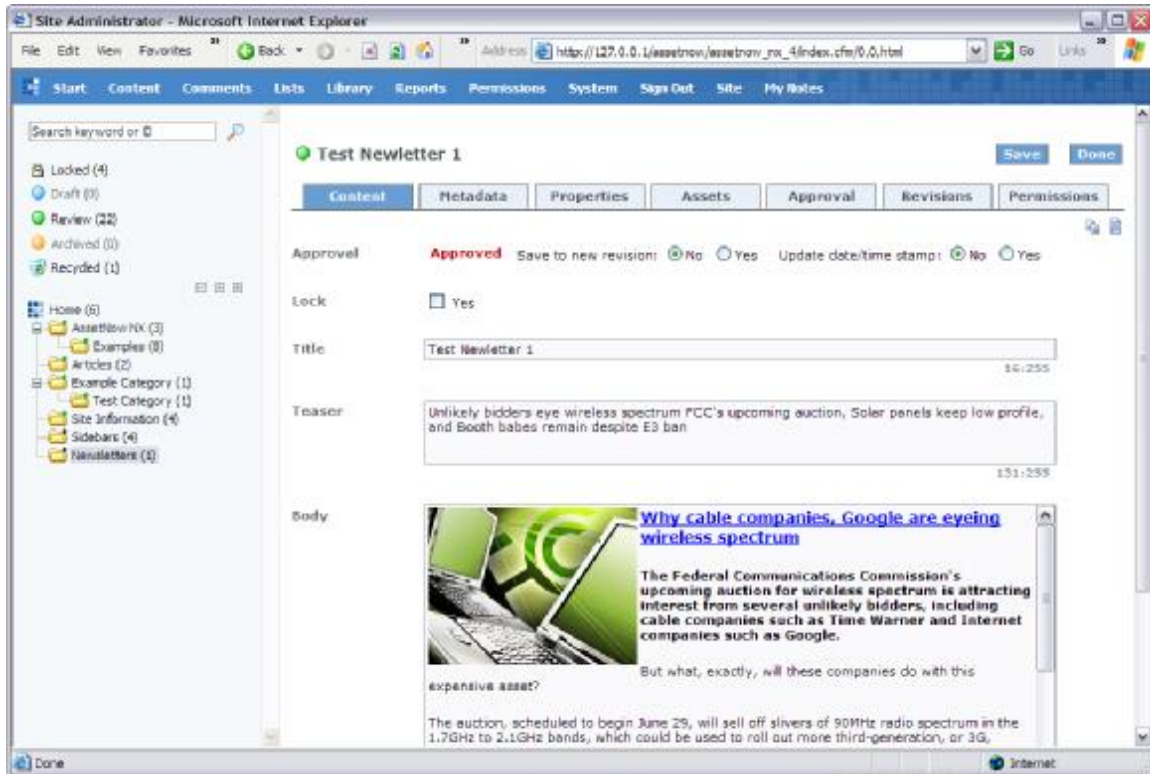
Create a category for your newsletters. You can make this category available to visitors to your site so they can view past newsletters. It is good practice to let potential subscribers review a newsletter so they can decide if they wish to subscribe. Set the category status to hidden if you do not want it to be available to visitors to your site.



You can create any number of newsletter categories to cater for different topics. For example you could create subcategories for marketing, support and news. Subscribers can choose which newsletter they wish to receive and change their subscription preferences at any time.

Step 2: Publishing a Newsletter

Next create a newsletter. Newsletters are content pages and published like any other content page using the ANX publishing tools. You should ensure you use formatting that is appropriate for our newsletter template design. Your web designer can set this up for you in the editor.



Publishing a newsletter page with images and links

A newsletter can contain links and images. Keep in mind that links must be displayed as the actual URL (link address), and that images will not be available in the plain text version of the newsletter. If the image is essential to understanding the newsletter content then you should provide a link to the newsletter page on your website for subscribers who receive plain text format newsletters.

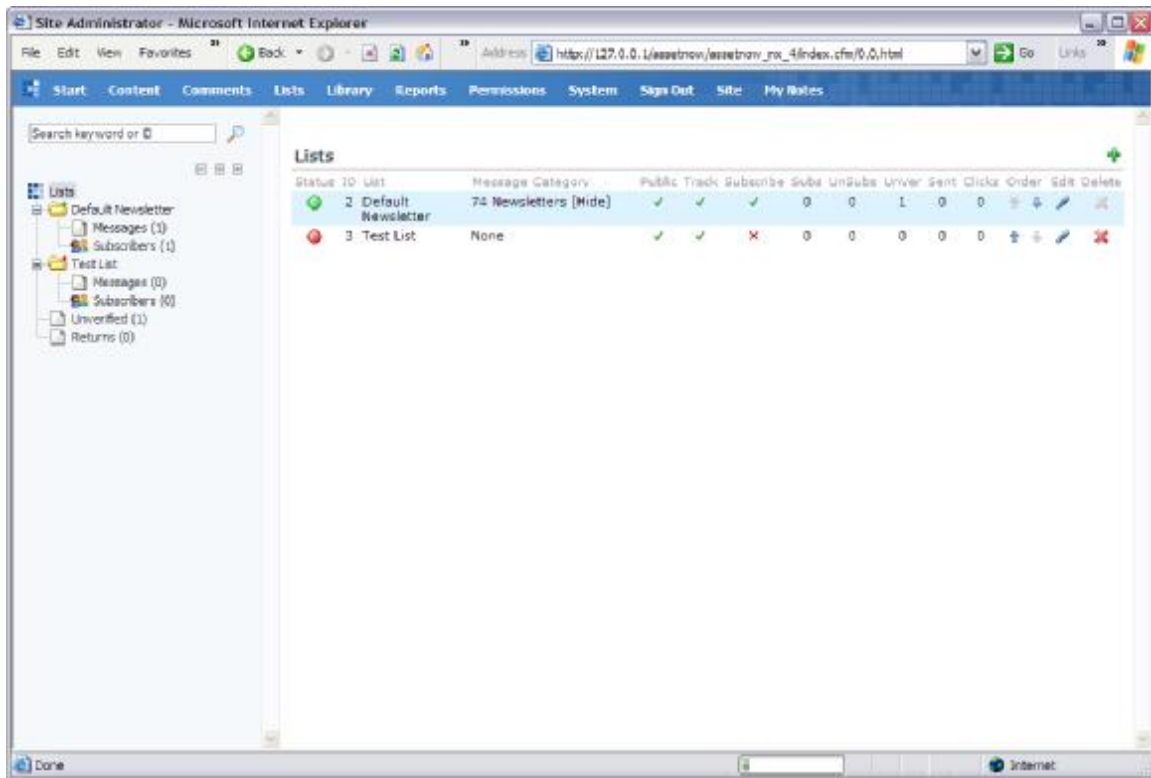
The lists (Newsletter) tool allows you to preview the HTML and plain text versions and edit the plain text version as required.

NOTE: Due to the different capabilities of subscriber email programs it is advisable to use a simple newsletter layout and design to ensure consistent display for the majority of your readers.

Step 3: Setup the List (Newsletter)

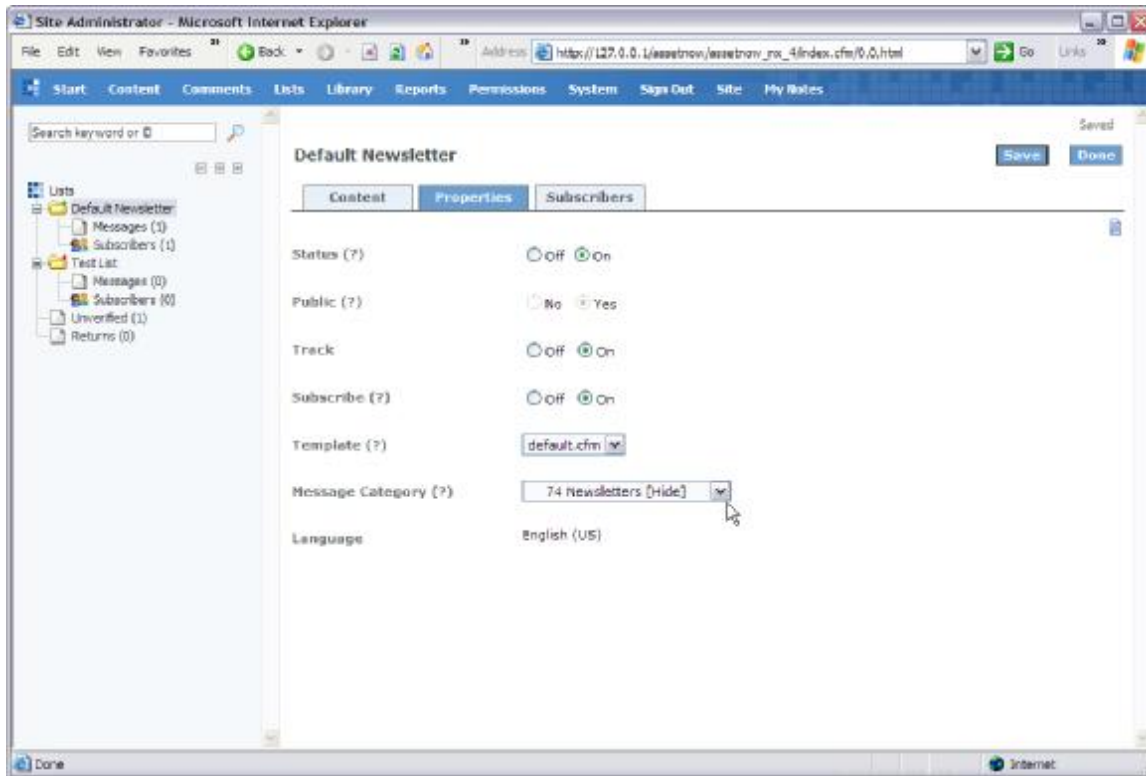
At this point your newsletter is just a content page in a category. We now need to assign this category to a list so that the list (newsletter) uses the content for the mail out to subscribers. When we have done this site visitors can then subscribe to the list and you can mail the content page to them.

Using the Lists tool you can setup any number of lists and assign a category to each list. In the example above where we setup multiple newsletters for marketing, support and news we would create a corresponding list for each.



AssetNow NX Lists (Newsletter) tool

Each list has a number of settings including the list title, a teaser which can optionally be displayed to subscribers, an optional default message that is added to each newsletter, and properties such as public or private (private lists are by invitation only and all subscribers must be approved), the category assigned to the list etc. You can also add subscribers to the list directly.



List / Newsletter Setup

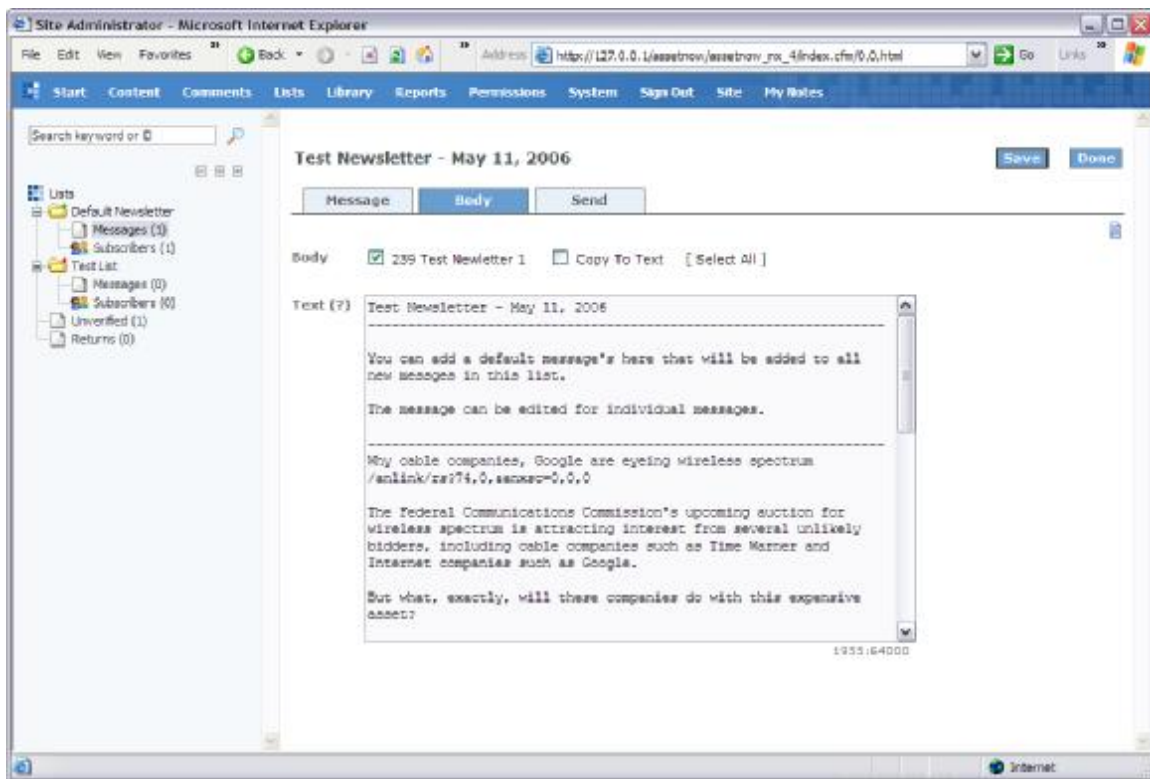
To enable subscriptions you must enable the list, *Status* = *On*, and the *Subscribe* option must also be *On*. This will make the list available in the subscription options. If you only have one list then subscribers enter their email address to subscribe. If you have multiple lists then subscribers can also select which lists they wish to join, in addition to entering their email address when subscribing.

Step 4: Setup the Message

If you have assigned a category to the list, the first active page in the category is used as the current list message (newsletter). For example if you publish a monthly newsletter you will create a new page in the newsletter category each month. The most recent content page in the category will always be used for the current mail out.

Each message comprises the page content, called the body of the message, and a title and a message. Typically the title is the same as the content page title however you can change this as required. The message is optional.

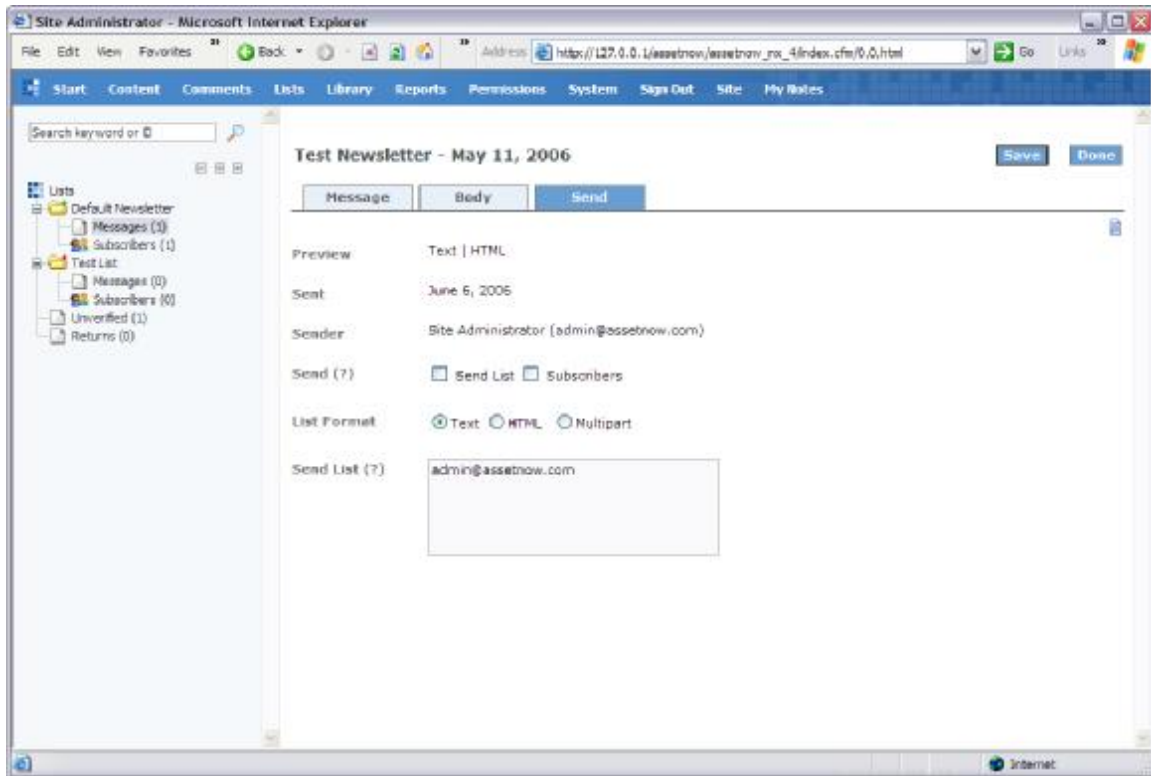
If you select the checkbox to assign the content page to the message body then AssetNow NX will also create a plain text version of the content page. Images and other items are not supported by plain text format messages are automatically removed. You must check the plain text version and edit it as required – it is unlikely that the automatic conversion will be perfect and may contain additional white space, line breaks etc. You can edit the plain text version directly in Lists tool or copy/paste to a text editor.



Editing the plain text version of the Newsletter

Step 5: Testing the Newsletter

The Send tab allows you to preview and send the message. You should always preview and send messages to yourself before sending the message to the list subscribers. Once you send the messages to subscribers you cannot recall them.



Always send test messages to yourself and check them before sending to subscribers

Step 6: Monitor List Performance

AssetNow NX tracks the number of times a subscriber clicks links in a newsletter. Subscriber churn can also be measured from the subscribe/unsubscribe counts.

Unverified subscribers are counted and can be manually deleted after a period as required. Keep in mind subscribers may take a while to confirm a subscription so do not be hasty to delete unverified subscriptions.

Returns are messages that were bounced back to the list no reply email address. AssetNow NX downloads the email messages in this mailbox and matches the email address with a subscriber email address. If a subscriber is identified then the return (bounce) is counted for the subscriber and the date noted. You can review and manually delete subscribers with a large number of

returns. Note that AssetNow NX deletes all messages from the no reply mailbox after processing so you should not use this email account for receiving email.

Templates

When setting up a list you select the template to be used to format the newsletter via the Properties tab.

List templates are located in the `../design/templates/lists/` system directory. There should be two versions of each template; a x/html version and a plain text version. They should have the same name with the plain text version using suffix `_text` as in these examples:

```
X/HTML template = default.cfm  
Plain text template = default_text.cfm
```

The example templates provided show how the newsletter content and subscription update and unsubscribe links are coded and added to your template.

Whilst AssetNow NX does not restrict the formatting and design elements used in your templates due to the differing display capabilities of email clients you it is advisable to favor simpler designs and layouts with fewer images.

Mail Out Volume

The AssetNow NX mail lists are intended for general website/company mailing volume. They are not designed for very high volume mass mailing. Whilst ColdFusion MX performance testing by Adobe shows that ColdFusion MX can process in excess of 1 million dynamically generated emails per hour you should not expect to use AssetNow NX lists for this volume of subscribers.

If you are using a shared host server you will not have all the ColdFusion server resources available for your exclusive use and should check with your host provider before sending a large number of mail outs.

If you do wish to process very large numbers of mailouts then you should consider 3rd party mass mailing solutions or customize the AssetNow NX mailer to schedule and batch processing mail outs.