

Using the COaTI Intranet

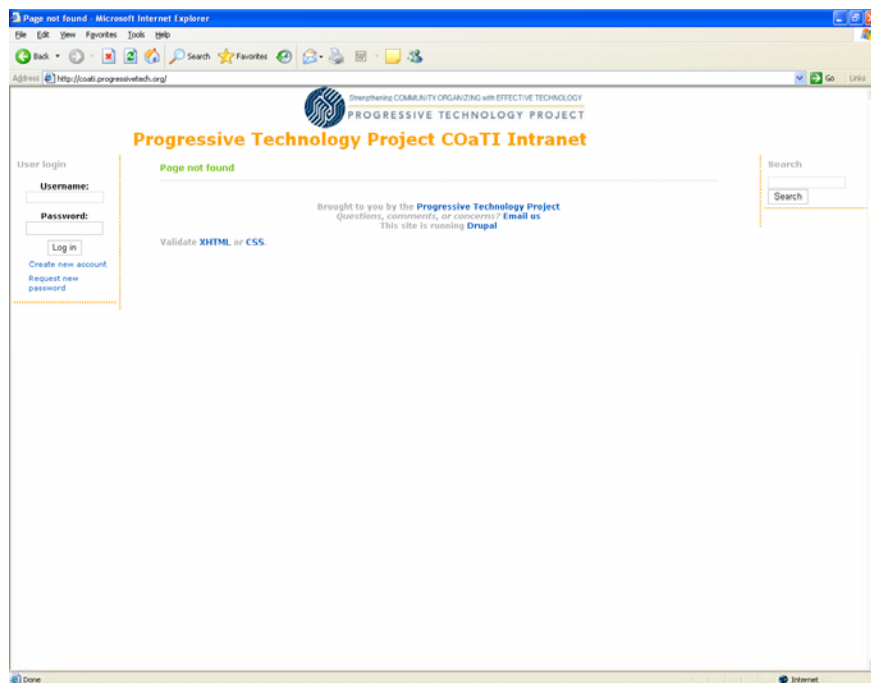
One of the goals of the Community Organizing and Technology Institute is to build relationships between organizers in community-led organizations that will foster peer-to-peer knowledge and skill sharing. Sometimes peer-to-peer sharing of knowledge, experience, and information can be as good if not better than, formal training, technology reference books, websites, and "experts."

The COaTI intranet is designed to support information sharing while also providing a mechanism to capture and store the kinds of questions you need answers to and the answers that your peers have to offer so that both questions and answers are more accessible to other organizers who are participating in COaTI. By participating in the COaTI intranet, you're getting access to the leading techies in community-led organizations. We hope that you'll find the COaTI intranet a useful resource. If you have suggestions or ideas for how we can make it easier to use or more helpful, please let us know.

How to use the COaTI Intranet

We've setup an account for each of you. Your username is your first and last name, with a space between. For example, my username would be Arif Mamdani. Your password was sent to you via a separate email. The first thing we'll do is login and change your password.

To login, go to <http://coati.progressivetech.org> (**please note** - you don't need the www). You'll see something that looks like this:



Go ahead and enter in your username and password in the appropriate boxes, and hit the *Log In* button.

The next page you'll be taken to will look like this:

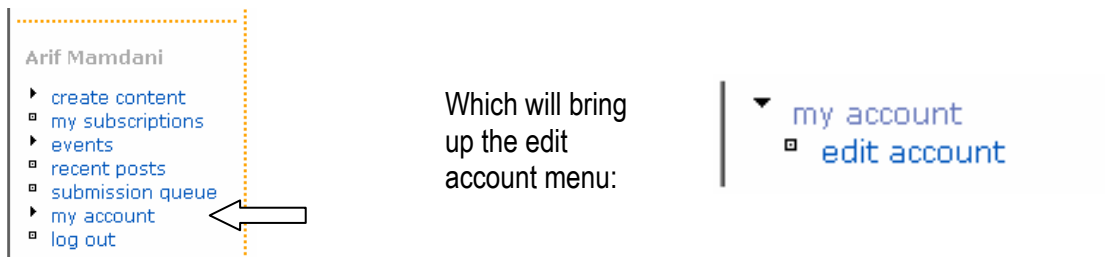


Let's spend a minute going through what's on this page.

In the center of the page, you should see questions posted, answers offered and resources suggested by past COaTI participants who are using the intranet to share skills. In the left and right sidebars, you have navigation elements and shortcuts to some frequently used sections of the COaTI Intranet.

Changing your password

To change your password, select the *my account* link from your user menu:



Select the *edit account* menu, and you'll see:

[Home](#) » [my account](#) » [Edit account](#)

Account information

Username:

Your full name or your preferred username: only letters, numbers and spaces are allowed.

E-mail address:

Insert a valid e-mail address. All e-mails from the system will be sent to this address. The e-mail address is not made public and will only be used if you wish to receive a new password or wish to receive certain news or notifications by e-mail.

Password:

Enter your new password twice if you want to change your current password or leave it blank if you are happy with your current password.

Here, you can change your email address or password.

If you haven't already, you should change your password from the default password that we created for you. After you've entered your password twice – once in each box, scroll down to the bottom of the screen and hit the *Save user information* button to save your changes.

How to use the COaTI Intranet, continued

Let's take a look at the Left Sidebar first:

Topic Areas

- ▶ [COaTI Information](#)
- ▶ [Database](#)
- [Documentation](#)
- [Graphics and Graphic Design](#)
- [Privacy and Security](#)
- [Project Updates](#)
- [Websites](#)
- [Miscellaneous](#)

Arif Mamdani

- ▶ [create content](#)
- [my subscriptions](#)
- ▶ [events](#)
- [recent posts](#)
- [submission queue](#)
- ▶ [my account](#)
- [log out](#)

The *Topic Areas* menu at the top lists the different sections of the site. *Topic Areas* are set by users who select categories that their content belongs in. Some content may appear under several headings. Clicking on any of the topics will take you to that section of the site.

Below the *Topic Areas* menu, you will see your user menu – your user name will be at the top of the menu. Below your user name, you will see different actions you can take.

Now, let's turn to the right sidebar:

At the top of the sidebar, you have a *search* box. Enter search terms in this box to search the COaTI Intranet.

Below the *search* box, there's a list of *Forum topics*. Most of the action on the COaTI Intranet happens in the forums. This menu shows you *Active forums* which are forums that have recent posts in them, as well as *New forum topics* which is what it sounds like – newly posted forum items.

The *upcoming events* box displays information on upcoming events. The dates for this COaTI will be in there, so if you don't remember what time the next session is, or you lose track of the date, you can always find the details on the intranet.

The *Who's online* section displays who's currently logged into the COaTI Intranet.

The screenshot shows the right sidebar of the COaTI Intranet. At the top is a search box with a 'Search' button. Below it is the 'Forum topics' section, which is divided into 'Active forum topics' and 'New forum topics'. Both sections list several topics with blue text, including 'Help getting rid of hard return in text file?', 'HELP!!! -- Remote Access, VPN, Routers', 'VOP Project Update', 'Post 11/2 reflections?', and 'Veritas Software Donation Program'. A 'more' link is visible at the end of the 'New forum topics' list. Below the forum topics is the 'Upcoming events' section, also with a 'more' link. At the bottom is the 'Who's online' section, which states 'There are currently 1 user and 0 guests online.' and includes an 'Online users:' heading.

So, that's how you get around the COaTI intranet. Now let's look at how you go adding information to the COaTI intranet.

Using the Forums on the COaTI Intranet

The forums are really where the most action happens on the COaTI Intranet because it's easiest place to quickly post a question and get answers fast.

To post a question to the COaTI Intranet, start by hitting the *create content* button at the top of your user menu. You'll be taken to page that looks like this:

Choose the appropriate item from the list:

- [book page](#)
A book is a collaborative writing effort: users can collaborate writing the pages of the book, positioning the pages in the right order, and reviewing or modifying pages previously written. So when you have some information to share or when you read a page of the book and you didn't like it, or if you think a certain page could have been written better, you can do something about it.
- [event](#)
Events are happenings scheduled for a specific date and time.
- [forum topic](#)
A forum is a threaded discussion, enabling users to communicate about a particular topic.
- [image](#)
An image you can insert into nodes, or see in image galleries.
- [page](#)
If you just want to add a page with a link in the menu to your site, this would be the best choice. Unlike a story, a static page by-passes the submission queue.
- [story](#)
A story is similar to a newspaper article. If stories are moderated, the post will be submitted to the attention of other users and be queued in the submission queue. Users and moderators vote on the posts they like or dislike, promoting or demoting them. When a post gets above a certain threshold it automatically gets promoted to the front page.

Description of the different content types:

- *Book page*: we're currently using book pages for resource materials – try doing a search for “database assessment” and you'll see an example of a book page
- *Forum topics*: create a forum topic for items that you want comment/answers about
- *Image*: used for screenshots of databases and other computer programs
- *Page*: used for items that don't need a lot of comment
- *Story*: similar to pages, subject to moderation. We're not really using them right now

In nearly all cases, you want to create a forum topic. To do so, just click the link for *forum topic* and you'll be taken to this screen:

Home » create content » Submit forum topic

Authoring information

Options

Authoring information

Authorized by:
arif

Authoring information

Authorized on:
2005-02-03 21:49 -06

Options

Published

In moderation queue

Promoted to front page

Static on front page

Create new revision

User comments

Disabled

Read only

Read/write

Title:

Sections:

<none>

COaTI Information

Database

-database screenshots

Documentation

Graphics and Graphic Design

Miscellaneous

Privacy and Security

Project Updates

Websites

2004-Session One

2004-Session three

You can choose one or more terms for this node.

Body:

- All HTML tags allowed
- You can use Textile to format text between the [textile] and (optional) [/textile] tags.
- [More information on formatting options](#)

Spellcheck:

Check Spelling

Click to check spelling of this document in a new window.

Preview Submit

You can ignore the choices in the top section – the defaults are correct.

Make sure you enter a **title** for your Forum Post

From the **sections** box, choose a section that best fits what you want to post about. You can choose multiple items by holding down the control (*ctrl*) key while you select items. If none of the sections fit, use Miscellaneous

The body box is where you type in your post. You can just go ahead and type in your information. It's not necessary, but if you want to learn about fancy formatting, click the *More information on formatting* link.

The spell-check isn't as good as it could be, use it if you want to, but don't rely on it. When you're done with your post, you can either hit the preview button to see what it looks like, or just go ahead and submit. Remember that in order for your post to appear in the forum, you have to hit the submit button. If you preview, but forget to submit, your post will be lost.

That's all there is to it. If you have questions about using the COaTI Intranet, either post them in the intranet, or send an email to arif@progressivetech.org