

CUNY Academic Commons - Bug #1848

Having Issues with Saving Menu Changes on the Commons Codex

2012-04-22 12:59 PM - scott voth

Status:	Resolved	Start date:	2012-04-22
Priority name:	Normal	Due date:	
Assignee:	Boone Gorges	% Done:	0%
Category name:	WordPress (misc)	Estimated time:	0.00 hour
Target version:	1.3.13		
Description			
<p>Hi - I've tried numerous times to save menu changes on the Codex, but when I do the save request fails. In Firefox, I just get a blank screen. In Chrome I get a message popup "Server Error" (HTTP 500). This all started when I was adding some items to the menu using drag and drop, and somehow lost the last 5 items. Then I put them back, but the last correction I wanted to make never seems to save. I was wondering if someone could take a look - maybe at the log - to see what's keeping it from updating. Thanks. I have attached a screenshot of the error I get in Chrome, below. I am using the builtin WordPress Menu function, and have a lot of items (maybe around 80). Codex - http://codex.commonsc.gc.cuny.edu</p>			

History

#1 - 2012-04-22 01:31 PM - Matt Gold

- Status changed from New to Assigned
- Assignee set to Boone Gorges
- Target version set to 1.3.13

#2 - 2012-04-23 09:44 AM - Boone Gorges

Scott, this appears to be a memory problem - when I put in some debug traces, I found that about 65 of your 76ish menu items were being saved.

I tried to nudge up the WP_MEMORY_LIMIT variable, to see whether it would make a difference, but it didn't seem to have any effect. André, I've added you as a watcher so that I could ask two questions: (1) Is there something in our php.ini that would be disallowing WP to override it? The value appears to be fixed at 64M. If so, would you mind removing the restriction (or even upping the memory limit temporarily, maybe to 96M, just for testing)? (2) What do you think of increasing the memory limit globally and permanently? If we have the resources, we should use them - RAM is the bottleneck for WP sites, and we could probably improve page load time with a higher memory limit.

#3 - 2012-04-23 10:41 AM - local admin

The purpose of that directive is, as per <http://www.php.net/manual/en/ini.core.php#ini.memory-limit>, to:

"prevent poorly written scripts for [sic] eating up all available memory on a server."

Fortunately (since we don't have to worry about that ;) the setting can be disabled by setting the value to -1.

I changed it now so please give it a shot and let me know if it helped?

If we notice any adverse effects of this change I can always change it back to something else.

#4 - 2012-04-23 10:53 AM - Boone Gorges

Hi André. Thanks for your help. I tried again but ran into the same 500 error. Did you restart Apache so that the new settings would take effect?

Related, I'm flying a bit blind. Does the commons user have access to the PHP error log? Maybe PHP errors are not being logged at all? Would you mind setting the PHP error reporting level to E_ALL <http://www.php.net/manual/en/errorfunc.constants.php>, and putting error messages into a log file that the commons user can tail?

#5 - 2012-04-23 11:18 AM - local admin

Boone Gorges wrote:

Did you restart Apache so that the new settings would take effect?

Yes, I did.

Related, I'm flying a bit blind. Does the commons user have access to the PHP error log? Maybe PHP errors are not being logged at all? Would you mind setting the PHP error reporting level to E_ALL <http://www.php.net/manual/en/errorfunc.constants.php>, and putting error messages into

a log file that the commons user can tail?

I thought this stuff was always logged to /var/log/httpd/error_log, no?

#6 - 2012-04-23 11:40 AM - Boone Gorges

I don't appear to have access:

```
[commons@commons log]$ ls -la /var/log | grep httpd
drwx-----. 2 root root 4096 Apr 22 03:40 httpd
```

#7 - 2012-04-23 11:52 AM - local admin

Boone Gorges wrote:

I don't appear to have access:

[...]

That's on the folder, but the file itself is world-readable. But hey, I took a look at it and it seems like it still not respecting the php.ini setting:

```
[Mon Apr 23 11:09:11 2012] [error] [client 157.55.16.230] PHP Fatal error: Allowed memory size of 67108864 bytes exhausted (tried to allocate 122880 bytes) in /var/www/html/wiki/includes/parser/Parser.php on line 2387
```

Let's test it one more time... meanwhile I'll see what I can do to get the setting to work.

#8 - 2012-04-23 12:07 PM - Boone Gorges

the file itself is world-readable

Here's what I get:

```
[commons@commons www]$ tail -f /var/log/httpd/error_log
tail: cannot open `/var/log/httpd/error_log' for reading: Permission denied
```

#9 - 2012-04-23 12:13 PM - local admin

Boone Gorges wrote:

the file itself is world-readable

Here's what I get:

[...]

That's odd. I'm not sure why... meanwhile I reset the permission over the whole /var/log directory for you:

```
[root@commons ~]# setfacl -R -m u:commons:rx /var/log/
```

..and now it looks ok:

```
[root@commons ~]# su - commons
[commons@commons ~]$ tail /var/log/httpd/error_log
[Mon Apr 23 12:09:19 2012] [error] [client 88.0.43.178] PHP Warning: Parameter 1 to Language::getMagic() expected to be a reference, value given in /var/www/html/wiki/includes/StubObject.php on line 58, referer: http://es.search.yahoo.com/search?p=%282002%29+Using+portfolios+to+assess+the+writing+of+ESL+students%3A+a+powerful+alternative%3F+Journal+of+Second+Language+Writing%2C+Volume+11%2C+Issue+1%2C+February%2C+49-72&ei=UTF-8&fr=moz35
[...]
```

#10 - 2012-04-23 12:17 PM - Boone Gorges

Cool, I can tail it now - thanks André :)

Strangely, though, when I test original problem, the process was killed, but I didn't get anything in the error_log at all - no Fatal Error of any kind. Back to the drawing board...

#11 - 2012-04-23 12:19 PM - local admin

I would love to help troubleshoot this. It may still be another server setting and I would not want to delay you unnecessarily.

We could connect via phone or IM to do it live. I have some time today.

#12 - 2012-04-23 12:33 PM - Boone Gorges

Thanks very much for the concern, André. I'm going to take a little more time to see if I can narrow it down the issue any further - I want to rule out one or two WP-level issues. If I can't make progress, I'll let you know.

#13 - 2012-04-24 03:29 PM - Boone Gorges

I did a bit more debug, and it definitely looks like this is a `memory_limit` issue. I ran a trace using PHP's `memory_get_usage()`, and confirmed that execution is getting killed around 256M.

FWIW, it's due to a crappy implementation in WP. See <https://core.trac.wordpress.org/ticket/14134>

I did try increasing WP's memory limit to 512M for testing. I tried two techniques, neither of which seemed to have any effect:

```
define( 'WP_MEMORY_LIMIT', '512M' );
```

and

```
ini_set( 'memory_limit', '512M' );
```

In both cases, the timeout still happened at 256M, and `ini_get('memory_limit')` returned '256M'. André, I guess that means that your `php.ini` change didn't stick. Would you mind changing it manually to a higher number (instead of -1) just for the time being?

#14 - 2012-04-24 03:37 PM - local admin

Ok, let's try 1024M. Just restarted now...

#15 - 2012-04-24 04:04 PM - Boone Gorges

Hey André. Still no dice - `ini_get('memory_limit')` is still returning '256M', both before WP launches and after it's initialized. Somehow the ini change isn't sticking.

#16 - 2012-04-25 08:44 AM - local admin

That's odd because `php_info()` is reporting the correct memory:

```
[root@commons ~]# php /var/www/status/php.php | grep memory
memory_limit => 1024M => 1024M
```

I wonder if the script is constrained by some other memory...

#17 - 2012-04-25 10:44 AM - Boone Gorges

André, can you try to `su` to the commons or Apache user? PHP supports `.user.ini` files that may be sneaking in there somewhere. (This is a total guess :))

#18 - 2012-04-25 12:42 PM - local admin

Boone Gorges wrote:

André, can you try to `su` to the commons or Apache user? PHP supports `.user.ini` files that may be sneaking in there somewhere. (This is a total guess :))

Same thing:

```
[commons@commons ~]$ php /var/www/status/php.php | grep memory
memory_limit => 1024M => 1024M
```

I wonder what other setting could be constraining this... Is there a test script I can run to see if further changes help? How do I best test this?

#19 - 2012-04-25 01:47 PM - Boone Gorges

- Status changed from Assigned to Reporter Feedback

Heh.

So, I had another look. Turns out that (1) WP was being annoying/tricky/buggy, and (2) I spoke too soon when I said that the `'memory_limit'` setting wasn't sticking.

When I was debugging, I tested against `WP_MEMORY_LIMIT` and `ini_set()`. But I didn't know about this:

<https://core.trac.wordpress.org/browser/trunk/wp-admin/admin.php?annotate=blame&rev=19097#L108> In other words - when you're viewing the Dashboard (any page inside of wp-admin), any memory limit you've set at runtime is overridden. This is not well documented. In fact, given that it was originally introduced to allow for **higher** memory use on the Dashboard <https://core.trac.wordpress.org/changeset/14491>, I think it's a bug - before overriding the more general WP_MEMORY_LIMIT with 256M, it should make sure that WP_MEMORY_LIMIT is not already greater than 256M.

Anyway, I set the 'WP_MEMORY_LIMIT' to 512M in our production environment file, and the menus are now saving correctly. Scott, can I ask you to verify before closing the ticket?

André - many thanks for your help. If it's OK with you, let's keep the memory_limit as-is, and monitor memory use (I'm a bit worried that a couple dozen simultaneous connections could cause problems, but I'm sure you run Munin or something to keep an eye on it).

#20 - 2012-04-25 02:06 PM - local admin

Boone Gorges wrote:

André - many thanks for your help. If it's OK with you, let's keep the memory_limit as-is, and monitor memory use (I'm a bit worried that a couple dozen simultaneous connections could cause problems, but I'm sure you run Munin or something to keep an eye on it).

You're welcome. Yes, that approach sounds fine.

#21 - 2012-04-26 06:29 PM - scott voth

Awesome! You guys are the best. Just confirmed that it is saving properly. Thanks!

#22 - 2012-04-26 07:48 PM - Boone Gorges

- *Status changed from Reporter Feedback to Resolved*

I think we all learned a little something :) Thanks for the confirmation, Scott.

Files

serverError.JPG	31.3 KB	2012-04-22	scott voth
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