

## CUNY Academic Commons - Feature #4331

### Improve visibility of forum "post by email" information

2015-07-24 09:17 AM - Matt Gold

<b>Status:</b> Resolved	<b>Start date:</b> 2015-07-24
<b>Priority name:</b> Normal	<b>Due date:</b>
<b>Assignee:</b> Chris Stein	<b>% Done:</b> 0%
<b>Category name:</b> Group Forums	<b>Estimated time:</b> 0.00 hour
<b>Target version:</b> Future release	
<b>Deployment actions:</b>	
<b>Description</b>	
<p>I think that most people do not realize that they can create new topics on group forums via email. Sam, can you please review our current presentation of this information and think about whether we can make it more readily apparent to users that this is possible?</p> <p>I can't find it, but we had an issue here earlier where I was asking Ray whether it might be possible to have simpler, listserv like email addresses for new-topic forum posting via email. The short answer is that given our Reply by Email system, neater (and group-wide standard) URLs are not possible -- each member has a custom address to which the message is sent.</p>	
<b>Related issues:</b>	
Related to CUNY Academic Commons - Feature #2880: RBE Group Post New Topic Sh...	<b>Resolved</b> <b>2013-11-08</b>
Related to CUNY Academic Commons - Feature #9010: Add group email address in ...	<b>Resolved</b> <b>2017-12-15</b>

#### History

##### #1 - 2015-07-28 01:58 PM - Samantha Raddatz

- File *newtopic\_heading.png* added
- File *newtopic\_email\_mockup1.png* added
- File *newtopic\_email\_mockup2.png* added

Right now the 'New Topic' form heading says 'Post New Topics via Email' which is confusing because the user is not doing that from this form. (See *newtopic\_heading.png* attached for a mockup of a more straightforward heading for this form.)

I like the box that appears when the user clicks 'Find out how!' but I think the placement is off. The user is already starting a new topic from the forum page when he/she sees this information. Instead, I've moved it to the top of the page, under the 'Post New Topic' button. This way the user can choose to post via email before getting to the form below. (See *mockup1* and *mockup 2* attached.)

It's probably too much to have that email address visible at all times -- unless it can be a more succinct address, it will just clutter up the page. The way the box appears now upon click works well, and adding an 'X' (circled in *mockup 2*) will make it easier to get rid of the box -- the only way to close it right now is to click 'Find out how!' again.

Ideally, the user wouldn't have to come to this page to click the link every time he/she wants to start a new forum via email. If that is the case, I don't know why the user wouldn't just use the form that's on this page. If there's a way to make it easy for people to save the email address, we should do that.

##### #2 - 2015-07-28 03:23 PM - Matt Gold

thank you, Sam! These look like great changes to me

##### #3 - 2015-07-29 01:13 AM - Raymond Hoh

I can't find it, but we had an issue here earlier where I was asking Ray whether it might be possible to have simpler, listserv like email addresses for new-topic forum posting via email.

Here's a link to the issue you are referring to, Matt -- [#2880](#).

I like the box that appears when the user clicks 'Find out how!' but I think the placement is off. The user is already starting a new topic from the forum page when he/she sees this information.

That was my original intention. The rationale is if you are creating a new topic, that's the only time you really need to be aware of the post topic via email option.

Right now the 'New Topic' form heading says 'Post New Topics via Email' which is confusing because the user is not doing that from this form.

Good catch, Sam. I believe bbPress used to have a "Post New Topic" heading shown directly below the "Post New Topics via Email" block. That might have been removed in a recent version of bbPress.

The main reason for placing the 'Post New Topics via Email' block above the regular New Topic form is that was the only appropriate place I could hook into bbPress at the time. But, I agree that the 'Post New Topics via Email' block can be formatted and positioned in a better way and I'm glad we are having this discussion to improve the placement and look of this block.

With regards to the mockups Sam made, one of my issues is the group header already has a bunch of call-to-actions:

```
Group type | active timestamp text | Leave group button
Group email subscription type (toggle)
Forum stats block | Post new topic button
Proposed CTA for Post by Email
(Toggled CTA for Post by Email)
```

Also, in the mockups, Post by email has preferential treatment over the main post new topic button. It should be the other way around as posting the new topic is the main action and posting by email is an enhancement.

Ideally, the user wouldn't have to come to this page to click the link every time he/she wants to start a new forum via email. If that is the case, I don't know why the user wouldn't just use the form that's on this page. If there's a way to make it easy for people to save the email address, we should do that.

You should be able to click on the email address and that should open up your email client, allowing you to save it as a contact.

Based on Sam's feedback from the dev call, I tested GMail when clicking on the post by email address and it looks like Google Contacts removes the address tag hash by default when you attempt to add the email address as a contact. In Google Contacts, you have to manually edit the contact info to adjust the email address.

This is more of a Google Contacts issue though, but I'd be interested to know if this occurs in other web email clients such as Outlook, Yahoo, etc, as well as in email apps on mobile devices. I believe desktop email clients should work for the most part.

#### #4 - 2015-07-30 03:59 PM - Samantha Raddatz

I agree that there is a lot going on at the top of the page, but the user probably isn't using most of those options regularly. If the header on the forum post form below is changed so that the "Create New Topic" text is larger and bold, and the "Post New Topics via Email" is small, I don't mind leaving the text about emailing posts down there. Maybe change the text to "You can **also** post new topics to this..."

Is there a way to also put this information about posting new forum topics via email into email notifications of forum posts? That way, the user would be able to not only respond to forum posts straight from the email, but also learn about the option (and view the link) to create new forum posts while using his/her email account.

That might help to make users more aware of the feature, without moving the placement so drastically.

#### #5 - 2015-08-02 08:34 AM - Boone Gorges

- Target version set to 1.9

#### #6 - 2015-11-09 12:48 PM - Boone Gorges

- Target version changed from 1.9 to 1.10

#### #7 - 2016-10-13 12:27 PM - Boone Gorges

- Assignee changed from Samantha Raddatz to Chris Stein

- Target version changed from 1.10 to Future release

Is there a way to also put this information about posting new forum topics via email into email notifications of forum posts? That way, the user would be able to not only respond to forum posts straight from the email, but also learn about the option (and view the link) to create new forum posts while using his/her email account.

This is an interesting idea. I wonder if there's a way to do this without cluttering up the email too much - we already have quite a bit going on in those emails.

My thought about the notice in the web interface, as well as additional text in the email, is that this feature is not likely to be widely used enough to warrant the devotion of our limited interface space. It seems to me that only power users are likely to understand or want the feature to create items by email (which, practically speaking, requires creating an email contact - a fairly high hurdle in terms of convenience and know-how).

Chris, it would be interesting to hear your point of view about this.

**#8 - 2017-01-10 08:48 AM - Matt Gold**

Chris, I'm giving this a bump. Also: to what extent does it make sense to ask users to click on the "find out how" link instead of simply providing the email address directly -- ie "Send email to [address] to create new topics via email!" or something like that?

**#9 - 2017-10-26 03:19 PM - Raymond Hoh**

- File *rbe-toggle.gif* added

This was brought up during testing for the 1.12 milestone by Scott.

I've made some attempts at making the notice feel more at home with bbPress styling. I feel it strikes the right balance with what we want to do.

Attached is a GIF showing what the new styling looks like:  
*rbe-toggle.gif*

Note: Ignore the "mailto" in the anchor text for the email link. I didn't catch that bug when I made the GIF. Should be fixed now.

Let me know what you think.

**#10 - 2017-10-26 03:41 PM - Matt Gold**

Thanks, Ray. I think we should adjust the wording a bit. Paige, do you have any suggestions for a phrase that could replace "Did you know you can post new topics to this group from your email client? Find out how"?

For instance, would just supplying the email address -- ie, "Post to this group via email: [address]" be better?

**#11 - 2018-03-22 10:30 AM - Boone Gorges**

- Related to Feature #9010: Add group email address in prominent way to Group homepage added

**#12 - 2019-03-12 12:39 AM - Raymond Hoh**

- Status changed from Assigned to Resolved

This was addressed in [#9010](#).

A further audit can be done when we tackle a site redesign.

**Files**

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newtopic_heading.png	36.5 KB	2015-07-28	Samantha Raddatz
newtopic_email_mockup1.png	136 KB	2015-07-28	Samantha Raddatz
newtopic_email_mockup2.png	150 KB	2015-07-28	Samantha Raddatz
rbe-toggle.gif	66.5 KB	2017-10-26	Raymond Hoh