

Implementing Public Users in ACM

Introduction

This document is intended to provide details on the set up and use of Public Users for ACM version 8.6 and beyond. The Public User functionality was added to ACM to provide greater separation between normal ACM users (content providers, content approvers, system administrators, etc.) and user accounts generated by and for the general public in order to access personalized sections of the site, to subscribe to email updates or to access RFP documents. The feature also allows for the creation of public user accounts with as little information as email address, password and preferred name. Public users are separated from normal ACM users in that they cannot be made a member of a group with permissions.

In order to create the Public User functionality, four enhancements were made in the ACM system. They are enhancements to the Application Form page type, the Login page type, the User Manager and the Group Manager. Each of these enhancements and how to use them all together will be described in detail below.

Creating Public User Groups

The creation of a public user group is the same process as creating a normal user group except for one small difference; a Public Group flag has been added to the Edit Group screen. When this flag is selected, all of the permission settings for the group are disabled. The group can still be used for personalization and can still be made available for external applications of page types such as the application form.

If the group was pre-existing and had non-public users associated with it, a system administrator can still flag the group as public. All permissions for the group will be removed but the non-public users can still reside in the group. If however, a group is set to public and has public users associated with the group, the public setting for the group cannot be made non-public until all of the associated public users are either moved out of the group or are manually made non-public users in the User Manager.

Creating Public User Accounts

Just as there are two ways to create normal ACM user accounts, there are two ways to create Public User accounts; manually and through the use of the Application Form page type. Manually creating public users is as simple as selecting the Public User flag in the Edit User screen when creating the user. When you do so, you will notice two major changes to the Edit User screen; first, the number of required fields is changed to be email address, password and preferred full name and the Login Username field disappears completely. This is because the email address field becomes the username for a public user. The second thing you will notice is that on the "Groups" tab, only public groups will be displayed. This is because a public user can only be assigned to a public group that has no permissions. If the user is a pre-existing non-public user that you wish to make into a public user, you will need to first remove the user from any non-public groups before they can be made a public user.

The second method of creating a public user is by using the application form page type. In order to create a public user using this page type, you must select the "Create accounts as Public Accounts" checkbox in edit mode of the page. Once selected, you can decide if the first name, middle name and last name of the public users must be required or even visible at all. Selecting the checkbox will automatically create all users created by this form as public users. You can add a custom group question to automatically assign the public user to a public group.

Public User Login

In order for your public users to log in to subscribe for email updates, access RFP documentation or personalized sections of the site, you will need to create a public login form. This is simply the existing login page type with a “Public Login” checkbox. When flagged as a Public Login form, the terminology of the login page changes so that it becomes more applicable to a public user account. The “Username” label changes to “Email Address” since that is what a public user uses to log in. Additionally, a public login form will always validate against the internal ACM user database. This will ensure that even if you use LDAP for validation for your regular ACM users, your public users will still be able to log in successfully.

Conclusion

Public Users provide the clear division between those users in your system who should have access to edit your content and those who should not. Users can be switched from public to non-public or vice versa but there will be system validation checks to be sure that a public user is not inadvertently given permissions they should not have. If you have any further questions about setting up public users, please contact CMS support at cmssupport@utoronto.ca.