Guestbook Script Installation and Configuration Guide

1   Introduction

Thanks for downloading and using our Guestbook Script. The script allows your visitors to leave greetings and comments. The entries can be edited and deleted in the admin area.

The script requires either PHP/4 or PHP/5 on Unix/Linux/Windows and a MySQL database. You also need a software (WinZIP for example) to unpack the script files after downloading from our server. You should have a solid understanding of HTML and some experience with script installation.

2   Features

By default the script shows the form fields "Name", "E-mail", "Homepage", "City", "State", "Country" and "Comment". You are free to remove some of the fields and only leave the ones you want. The fields "Comment" and "Name" are mandatory and the form will not submit until those fields have been filled out.

In order to prevent the script from being abused by automatic spam bots, you can activate several anti-spam features. Read more about that in the section "Modules".

The script also features an admin area where entries can be edited and deleted. Also there is a section for settings where you can set the front end language as well as the admin account.

2.1   Outline

- Visitors can enter a name, e-mail, homepage, and comment text
- To prevent comment spam you can enable several anti-spam features
- Admin area for editing and deleting comments
- Completely template driven
- Installation routine

2.2   Guestbook

By default the script shows the fields name, e-mail, homepage, city, state, coutnry, and comment text. You are free to remove all but the name and comment text field from the HTML template.

2.3 Admin Area

2.3.1 Latest Entries

The list with the latest posted entries is sorted by date descending. You can here edit, delete, approve or disapprove comments.

2.3.2 Admin Account

In this section you can change login name, e-mail, and login password.

2.3.3 Configuration

2.3.3.1 General Settings

The settings section allows you to:

- Change the language of the script
- Change the number of comments per page (front end)
- Change the comment order direction (front end)
- Set the script URL

2.3.3.2 Additional Options in Configuration

Please read the next chapter about modules.

2.3.4 Backup

Click the button "Export Backup" if you want to backup the data of the script. The new backup will appear in the list of backups where you can download, delete and import it.

3 Feature Modules

Except for the option "General Settings" all additional options belong to the feature modules. These modules are small tools that are integrated into the script and add various kind of functionality.

These tools reside in the folder /modules/. Each module has its own language file and template file. You can find those files in the folders

```
/module/gentlesource_module_*/language/
```

and

```
/module/gentlesource_module_*/template/.
```

3.1 Akismet

Akismet.com analyzes incoming comments and checks if that comment has been listed as Spam. You need to get an API Key from http://www.akismet.com/ by registering an account at http://www.wordpress.com/. If you leave this API key empty, Akismet will not be used.

3.2 Boilerplate

This module allows you to prepare text modules that you can easily insert in a text box. That saves you from writing similar text over and over again. Boilerplate refers to any text that is or can be reused in new contexts (see also Wikipedia).

You can create an arbitrary number of text items. The "Title" of an item appears in the select menu above the text field. After selecting an item the prepared text will be pasted into the text field.

3.3 CAPTCHA

The Captcha feature displays an image with a string of characters. In order to prove that the visitor is not an automatic spam program, he has to enter the characters shown in the image into a form field. In case both strings match the comment will be accepted.

This feature can be enabled and disabled in the admin area.

Note: The Captcha feature requires GD2 library and Freetype to be installed on the server which is the case on most servers.

3.4 Content Block

This option allows you to moderate or blocks comments on the basis of the posted content. Enter one word or phrase per line in the text box.

3.5 Content Replace

Enter text that you want to be replaced automatically with text you can specify.

3.6 Comment Mailer

Activate this option if you want to have new comments mailed to your e-mail address.

3.7 Flood Protection

This module prevents users from re-submitting the same content (i.e. when hitting the reload button) over and over again. It checks the content against existing entries in the database.

3.8 IP Block

Moderate or block comments based on the IP address of the visitor.

3.9 Keyword Highlighting

This feature highlights the keywords of the search engine referrer in the text.

3.10 Referrer Log

The module writes date, time referrer and request URI of a visit to a text file.

3.11 Smilies/Emoticons

Activate this option to get ASCII emoticons such as :-) or ;-) replaced with images in the text.

3.12 Social Links

Enabling this feature will display a list with links to social services such as del.icio.us or digg below the page content. You can edit the list in the template link.tpl.html in the module folder.

3.13 Text Link Ads

Make money with your website and publish simple text link ads or buy text link ads to improve your traffic and search engine rankings. You can find more information at Text Link Ads: http://www.text-link-ads.com/?ref=37444.

In order to use this feature you have to register with Text Link Ads.

3.14 Word Filter

The word filter replaces undesirable words and phrases with a character or a string of characters that you can specify.

4 Installation

4.1 Step-by-Step Guide

The script has been configured in a way that makes it immediately ready to use. Please follow these steps:

1. Connect to your web server using an FTP program.

2. Create a new folder on your server named i.e. `guestbook`.

3. Upload the whole script including all files and folders to your server into the new folder. Make sure the original file structure appears on the server. Read more details in chapter 4.2 Upload.

4. Make sure the script folder and the sub-folder `cache` are writable by the script (chmod 777). Read more details in the chapter 4.3 File and Folder Permissions. If those folders are not writable the installation will fail.

5. Call the admin area of the script in your browser:

   `http://www.example.com/guestbook/admin/`

6. You are probably seeing now the installation screen of the script. Please make sure you have the database access data. Read more details in chapter 4.4 Database Access Data.

7. Choose a prefix for the database tables. Default value is `g7k_` and there is actually no need to change that unless you want to have more than one installation of the script side by side.

8. Enter the information for the admin account you want to create and use, once the script is working.

9. Click the button Install Now. In case the installation was successful, you will be provided with a link to the login screen where you can use the account data you just entered.

4.2 Upload

All files have to be uploaded in text mode (ASCII mode) except for the font file(s) in the folder `/include/font/`. The font file `daft.ttf` has to be transferred in binary mode. Otherwise the Captcha feature will not work properly.

4.3 File and Folder Permissions

Most, if not all, FTP programs allow you to change the file permissions. That can either be done with a command line and the command chmod or with some clicks on menus and checkboxes.

We have published a guide with examples of common FTP programs on our website.

http://gentleurl.net/chmod/

4.4 Database Access Data

You need following four items:

- Database hostname
- Database name
- Database user name
- Database password

You either get those data from your web space control panel or ask your web space provider about them.

5 Layout Customization – Colors, Fonts, Styles

The script is template driven. That means you do not have to work with PHP source code in order to change the layout of the script.

Colors and fonts are controlled with CSS in the file `/templates/default/style.css`.

The template files (`layout.tpl.html`, `comment.tpl.html`) can be edited like normal HTML files. You can find those files in the folder /template/. The folder `/default/` contains the front end layout.

It is important, that the replacement tags – {$txt_example}, {$other_example} – stay as they are. Otherwise the script will not work. Some HTML editors tend to alter the source code of an HTML. Please be careful.

You are free, of course, to move parts of the template files. For instance, if you wanted to move the comment form above the entries, you would have to edit the file /templates`/default/comment.tpl.html`. The comment form is marked with

`<!-- Comment Form Start -->` and `<!-- Comment Form Start -->`

6 Text, Wording and Language Files

All text and wording of the script is held in the language files in the folder `/language/`. That includes the form labels as well as all the text in the admin area. You can create your individual language file by copying and renaming one of the existing files. In order to make the new file available in the language list in the settings section, you have to add it to the list `$g7k['available_languages']` in `/configuration/default.inc.php`.

There are also language files in the module folders:

```
/module/gentlesource_module_*/language/
```

Should you have translated a file into your language we would really appreciate it if you could send us the file.

7   Backup the Database

The script allows you to export the database content into a text file that is written on the server. Those export files are then listed in the "Backup" section of the admin area. Each file can be imported back, downloaded or deleted.

8   Update to Newer Version

In case you are updating your script to a newer version it is recommended to backup your current files and database data.

After you have uploaded the script files of the new version, the script will automatically recognize it and display the update screen. Enter here your MySQL data and the admin are login data and run the update.

8.1   Update from Versions Older than 2.0.0 (<= 1.9)

Contact our support.

9   Help and Support

If you run into problems while installing or configuring Comment Script, please use our support forum on http://www.gentlesource.com/.