

FlexiContact User Guide

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Introduction

FlexiContact is a simple but flexible contact form for Joomla! with the following features:

- Configurable to, cc, and bcc addresses
- Configurable page header, page text, page image, and bottom text
- Configurable field names
- Five one-line fields
- One list box
- One configurable size text area
- All fields can be optional, mandatory, or not included. The fields can be renamed and used for any purpose.
- The subject field can be enabled or disabled, and can have a default text.
- Optional captcha system ('please click on the cat/dog/etc to send'). You can add to or change the captcha pictures
- Optional "magic word" system. The user must locate and enter a pre-defined word or phrase to send the message.
- Log file viewable in back end
- Client IP address logging
- Multi-language

Licence

FlexiContact is free software licensed under the GNU General Public License Version 2, the same licence that Joomla! itself uses. The GNU General Public License is a Free Software license. For more details please see <http://www.gnu.org/licenses/old-licenses/gpl-2.0.html>

Installation

Install as a regular Component in the usual way using the Joomla! Universal Installer.

Following installation, you will find a new administrative component called "FlexiContact", where you can view the log file.

To create a contact form on the site, create a menu item of type FlexiContact.

Uninstalling

To uninstall, use the uninstall option in the Universal Installer. All trace of FlexiContact will be removed, including the log file and any FlexiContact image packs.

Upgrading

To upgrade to a newer version of FlexiContact, first uninstall FlexiContact as described above, then install the new version.

You will need to reinstall any FlexiContact image packs you are using.

If you are not using SEF, your FlexiContact menu item(s) should still work after the upgrade. If you are using SEF, clicking the menu item may give a 404 (not found) error. Editing the menu item and saving it will fix this.

Making a Contact Page

To make a contact page, create a menu item of type Flexi Contact.

All of the form parameters are configured in this menu item.

Page Title, Page text, Image, and Image Align

These control fixed content at the top of your contact page. The Page Text can include html.

The screenshot shows a configuration window titled "Parameters (Basic)". It contains the following fields:

- Page Title:** A text input field containing "Contact Us".
- Page text:** A large text area containing the text: "To contact us via this page you will have to find the correct magic word, which you can find in any of our user guides. <p>Please check that you type your email address correctly.</p>".
- Image:** A dropdown menu showing "contact_us.png".
- Image Align:** Two radio buttons, "Left" (which is selected) and "Right".

Email To

The address that messages are sent to. Specify multiple addresses by separating them with commas. ***This field is required. The form will not work without it.***

Cc, Bcc

Messages are copied to these addresses

Number of captcha images

The number of images displayed for the user to choose the correct image from. Specify 0 to disable the captcha system.

Magic Word

A word or phrase that the user must enter to send the message. Leave blank to disable the magic word system.

Show Subject

You can select whether to display the subject line or not.

Default Subject

Specify a default subject line to pre-fill the subject field, or to be used if you choose not to display the subject line.

The screenshot shows a configuration window for email settings. It contains the following fields:

- Email To:** A text input field containing "me@gmail.com". A red callout bubble with the text "Required!" points to this field.
- Cc:** An empty text input field.
- Bcc:** An empty text input field.
- Number of captcha images:** A text input field containing "0".
- Magic Word:** A text input field containing "Contact".
- Show Subject:** Two radio buttons, "Yes" (which is selected) and "No".
- Default subject:** An empty text input field.

Fields

There are five one line fields, one list box field, and one text area field. Each field can be:

- Optional, i.e. the user can fill it in or leave it blank
- Mandatory, i.e. the user cannot leave it blank
- Disabled, i.e. not shown at all

You can specify the prompt for each field, i.e. the text telling the user what the field is for.

List	Optional
Prompt	Regarding
List items	Please specify, Eyessite (Joomla) , Eyessite (Mambo) , Flexicontact , Minicalendar , SPGM (Joomla) , SPGM (Mambo) , Rentalot , Other
Line 1	Disabled
Prompt	
Line 2	Disabled
Prompt	

List Items

Specify list items separated by commas. For a blank first item, start the list with a comma. If 'mandatory' is selected, the user is forced to make a non-blank selection from the list.

Text Area

The text area is where the user will enter their main message. You can specify the size of the text area, but the size is purely cosmetic. You can enter much more text in a text area than will visually fit. Scroll bars appear if needed.

Text Area	Optional
Prompt	Your message
Width	50
Height	10
Bottom text	Please accept our apologies for making it harder to contact us. Please see Help and Support to understand our reasons, and see the User Guides for the magic word.

Bottom Text

Any text you want to add at the bottom of the page. It can also include html.

Linking to a Contact Page without a Menu Link

You might want to create a link to a component (such as FlexiContact) without having that link visible on a menu. For example, you might want to include the link within the text of an article. You can achieve this using a hidden menu:

- In Menu Manager, create a new menu. Call it "Hidden".
- Create a menu item of type FlexiContact on this new "Hidden" menu.
- Go to Module Manager, find the "Hidden" module of type "mod_mainmenu", and enable it.
- Go to your site front end, where you should see the new menu somewhere. Click on the link to FlexiContact and make a note of the URL.
- Now go back to Module Manager and disable the "Hidden" module. Now, this menu will never be shown on your site, but the URL that you saved remains valid. You can use this URL to create a link in an article.

Embedding FlexiContact in an Article

You can embed FlexiContact in an article using the following technique:

Make a hidden menu link as described above and note the URL, which will be something like this:

```
http://mysite.com/index.php?option=com_flexicontact&Itemid=xx
```

Where xx is the Joomla menu item ID.

Include the following html in any article:

```
<object type="text/html" data="index.php?option=com_flexicontact&Itemid=xx&tmpl=component" width="800px" height="630px"></object>
```

Note that you will have to edit the article in html mode.

In the past the html <object> tag has had patchy browser support, but it appears to be reasonably well supported by modern browsers. Google for more details.

Joomla Global Mail Settings

Prior to version 2.11, FlexiContact called the php mail function directly, and ignored the mail settings in Joomla Global Configuration.

From version 2.11, FlexiContact uses the Joomla sendMail utility function, which means it does use the mail settings in Joomla Global Configuration. If you have not already set these up, you will need to do so before FlexiContact will work properly.

Go to Site, Global Configuration, Server:

Mail Settings	
Mailer	PHP Mail Function <input type="button" value="v"/>
Mail from	lesarbresdesign@gmail.com
From Name	Design <input type="button" value="v"/>
Sendmail Path	/usr/sbin/sendmail
SMTP Authentication	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes
SMTP Security	None <input type="button" value="v"/>
SMTP Port	25
SMTP Username	<input type="text"/>
SMTP Password	<input type="text"/>
SMTP Host	localhost

Please note that the "Mail from" address is the source of several [Common Problems](#). It is the address that emails are shown as coming from. It should be a valid email address otherwise many mail servers will reject your messages as spam. Some servers will only send mail if the from address actually exists on the sending server.

The Captcha System

The captcha system is deliberately simple. We don't want to make life difficult for potential customers. We just need some basic protection from automated contacts. So the captcha system is very easy to use. It displays a number of images at random, and asks the user to click on the cat / mouse / dog / etc.

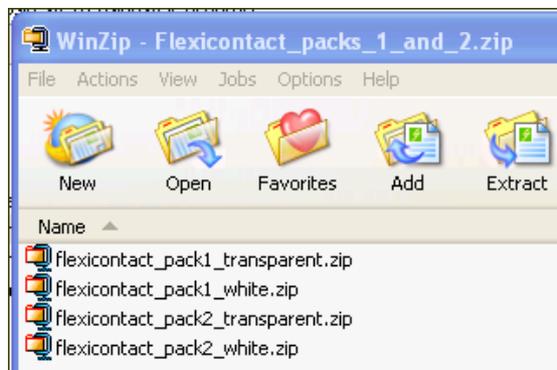
To use the captcha system, set the "Number of captcha images" setting in the menu item to a number greater than zero and less than or equal to the number of images installed. That number of images will be displayed at the bottom of the contact form, and the user must select the correct image for the email to be sent.

Adding More Images

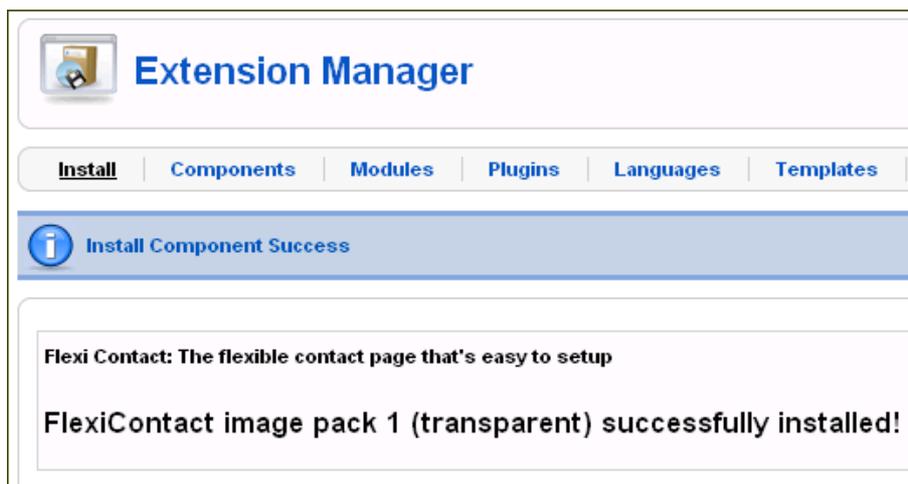
Twenty images are installed with FlexiContact. For FlexiContact version 3.00 and above, additional image packs are available from our website:

<http://extensions.lesarbresdesign.info/en/flexicontact/captcha-image-packs>

Download the zip file and unzip it to your local computer. It will contain two or more zip files.



Once you have extracted these, use the Joomla! Universal Installer to install them.



If your site has a light coloured background, you might like to try the transparent images, but on darker backgrounds the grey shadows might not look too good.



For dark backgrounds you should use the images with white backgrounds. You can always try one set and then install the other set over it. The sets from the same pack just overwrite each other.

After installation, you can delete any images you don't like using the FlexiContact admin interface.

Please do not install image packs over versions of FlexiContact below 3.00 as this could cause various errors.

Making Your Own Images

You can also make your own captcha images. To be accepted by FlexiContact they must be less than 150 pixels wide. Add them to the directory:

`components/com_flexicontact/images` directory

To look good they need to be a consistent size and style, and they need to be clear and unambiguous.

For each image, you must add a description of the image to the language file, for example for the English language, edit the file at `language/en-GB/en-GB.com_flexicontact.ini`.

Each image must have an entry in the language file. For example an image called "018.gif" should have an entry "IMAGE_018.GIF=pyramid".

Note the use of upper case in the language file tag, even if the filename is lower case.

The Magic Word System

The optional magic word system enables you to define a word or phrase that the user must find and enter before he or she can send you a message.

FlexiContact does not display the magic word, it is up to you to show it somewhere on your site. You could display it on the contact page itself (in the Page Text or Bottom Text), or you could make it more difficult to find, for example by placing it on another page or inside a PDF document that you want people to read before sending you a message.

If you define a magic word, the user must enter it correctly for the message to be sent. The test is case insensitive. If you leave the magic word blank, the magic word field is not displayed, and no magic word entry is required.

Language Support

All of the fixed text displayed on the front-end contact page is retrieved from the language file for the current site language. FlexiContact is currently supplied with several language files, for example:

English	en-GB.com_flexicontact.ini
French	fr-FR.com_flexicontact.ini
German	de-DE.com_flexicontact.ini

For the supplied languages, FlexiContact should automatically work in your local language. To support your own language, you will need to create the language file for your local language and copy it to the correct directory on your website. For example the English language file is placed in the directory language/en-GB.

If you need to use accented characters, make sure you save the file with UTF-8 encoding. If you don't have an editor that can do that, we recommend [Notepad++](#).

The file language/en-GB/en-GB.com_flexicontact.ini is as follows:

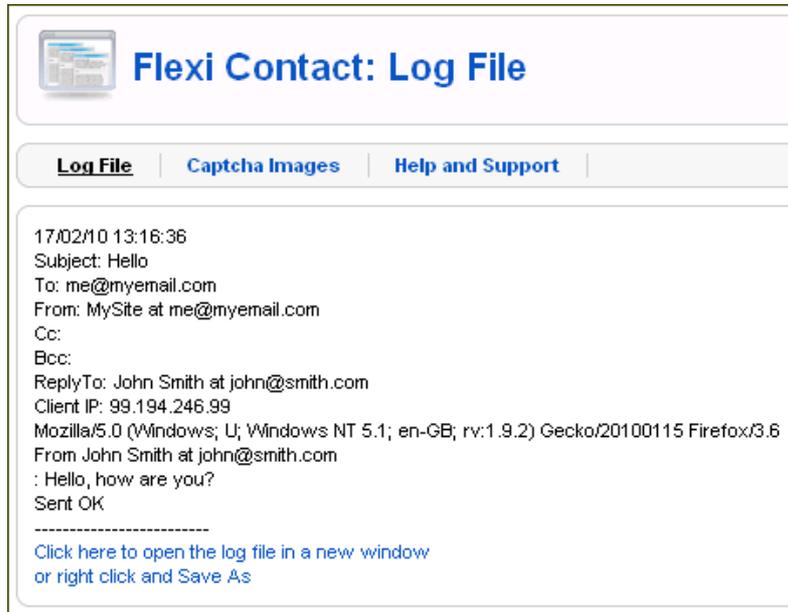
```
FROM_NAME=Your name
FROM_ADDRESS=Your E-mail address
SUBJECT=Subject
COPY_ME=Email a copy of this message to your own address
MAGIC_WORD=Magic word
WRONG_MAGIC_WORD=<strong>* Wrong magic word</strong>
SEND_BUTTON=Send
MESSAGE_SENT=<strong>Your message has been sent</strong>
MESSAGE_NOT_SENT=<strong>Your message was NOT sent. Please see below
for the reason.</strong>
REQUIRED=<strong>* Required</strong>
BAD_EMAIL=<strong>* Invalid email address</strong>
WRONG_PICTURE=<strong>* Sorry, you got the wrong picture!</strong>
SELECT_IMAGE=Please click on the
IMAGE_001.GIF=light bulb
IMAGE_002.GIF=duck
IMAGE_003.GIF=plane
IMAGE_004.GIF=penguin
IMAGE_005.GIF=bus
IMAGE_006.GIF=hot air balloon
IMAGE_007.GIF=koala bear
IMAGE_008.GIF=cat
IMAGE_009.GIF=suitcase
IMAGE_010.GIF=bike
IMAGE_011.GIF=spotty dog
IMAGE_012.GIF=lion
IMAGE_013.GIF=butterfly
IMAGE_014.GIF=rabbit
IMAGE_015.GIF=tiger
IMAGE_016.GIF=sunset
IMAGE_017.GIF=world
IMAGE_018.GIF=pyramid
IMAGE_019.GIF=elephant
IMAGE_020.GIF=flower
```

Please send new language files to us so that we can include them with the product.

The Administration Interface

The Log File

The log file logs all usage of the contact form. It's really intended as a tool for problem diagnosis.



Flexi Contact: Log File

[Log File](#) | [Captcha Images](#) | [Help and Support](#)

17/02/10 13:16:36
Subject: Hello
To: me@myemail.com
From: MySite at me@myemail.com
Cc:
Bcc:
ReplyTo: John Smith at john@smith.com
Client IP: 99.194.246.99
Mozilla/5.0 (Windows; U; Windows NT 5.1; en-GB; rv:1.9.2) Gecko/20100115 Firefox/3.6
From John Smith at john@smith.com
: Hello, how are you?
Sent OK

[Click here to open the log file in a new window](#)
[or right click and Save As](#)

Captcha Images

If you add one or more of our captcha image packs, you might want to delete some images to create a themed appearance on your site. To make this easier, we have added a very simple image manager to the back end administration interface. To delete an image, just click Delete. The captcha system will work with however many images are left.



Flexi Contact: Captcha Images

[Log File](#) | [Captcha Images](#) | [Help and Support](#)

	005.gif bus 100x75 Delete		017.gif world 100x75 Delete		019.gif elephant 100x75 Delete
	A_018.gif cat 100x75 Delete		B_002.gif three golf balls 100x75 Delete		B_019.gif saw 100x75 Delete

Help and Support

Just contains some useful links.

If you like FlexiContact, please consider writing a review or making a donation.

Common Problems

SMTP Server Response: 451

This error occurs on some email servers when there are "bare LF's" (line feeds without a preceding carriage return) somewhere in the message or message headers. In FlexiContact versions up to 1.05 this could be caused by entering new-lines in the "List items" field on the FlexiContact menu item. If this error occurs in subsequent versions, please contact us.

SMTP Server Response: 554

"The message was rejected because it contains prohibited virus or spam content". This occurs on some email servers if the "Mail from" address is not a valid email address.

Mail Not Delivered

A few people have reported this problem, and it can be a difficult one to resolve. Google <php mail not received> and you'll get over 100 million results.

If FlexiContact displays "Your message has been sent", it means that the PHP mail sending function completed successfully. That means that FlexiContact successfully passed the mail to the mail sending utility on your server. It does not guarantee that the mail will actually be sent, or that it will actually arrive.

A common problem is for mails to be rejected in a spam or security filter somewhere, and a common cause of this is validation of the "Mail from" address. Some servers don't validate it at all, while some require it to be a properly formed email address. **Some servers will only send mail if the from address actually exists on the sending server.**

Reply-To Address Ignored

You might experience this problem if you use Gmail. If the "From" address is either the same as the "To" address, or is configured in your GMail Settings as one of the 'Send As...' accounts, Gmail replies to the "To" address instead of the "Reply-To" address. A workaround is to specify a non-related "From" address in the menu item. There has been some discussion about this problem here:

<http://www.google.com/support/forum/p/gmail/thread?tid=74d00d5e2605242d&hl=en>

Help and Support

FlexiContact is free software, and it's not really possible to provide free support as well. We won't help you with cosmetic changes, or to resolve specific problems with your template or web server. But if you find a real problem, we do want to hear about it, and we will try to help. If you do find a problem, please contact us, giving us as much detail as you can.

If you are using a Windows web server, or Xampp, please mention that as those do sometimes throw up some odd issues. Please also mention the version of PHP that you are running.

To use the contact form on our website, the magic word is: Contact

<http://extensions.lesarbresdesign.info/en/contact-us>

You can find a detailed version history for FlexiContact, and check whether you have the latest version, here:

<http://extensions.lesarbresdesign.info/en/version-history/flexicontact>

If you use FlexiContact, please post a rating and a review at the Joomla! Extensions Directory

<http://extensions.joomla.org/extensions/contacts-and-feedback/contact-forms/9743>

If you like FlexiContact, you can find our other extensions here:

<http://extensions.lesarbresdesign.info/>

or here:

<http://extensions.joomla.org/extensions/owner/chrisguk>