FIRSTCLASS® 9.1

What's New

January 2008

FIRSTCLASS®

Powering collaborative online communities.

This document provides an overview of the contents of FirstClass 9.1. This new release of FirstClass delivers most of the remaining features described in the FirstClass 9 Roadmap document that were not included in FirstClass 9.0. This release also contains a number of new features that have been requested by customers but that were not listed in the FirstClass 9 Roadmap.

As with all FirstClass releases, FirstClass 9.1 contains a number of quality improvements and minor enhancements. These are listed in the detailed release notes.

Note that a few of the features described in this document were actually released in the FirstClass 9.0 Service Pack in early December, 2007. For completeness they are documented here.

New in FirstClass Server

Improvements to Applications

Immediate Updates to Preferences Form

When the administrator makes changes to user settings on the Preferences form, the changes take effect immediately. The user no longer has to log in again.
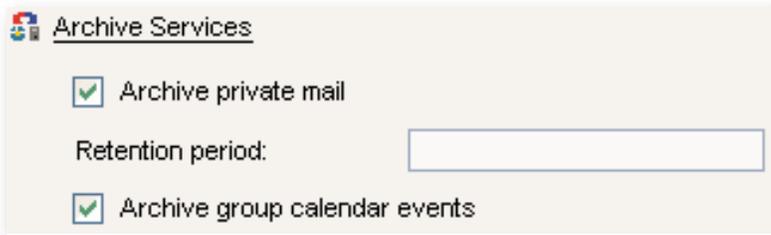
Archive Services

Archive Services was first delivered as part of FirstClass 9.0. That initial release included support for the archiving of email, voice mail and fax mail messages along with instant message transcripts. In FirstClass 9.1, Archive Services has been extended to now archive multi-user calendar events, along with published conferences and conference messages.

You can configure conferences and conference messages to be archived by adding the conferences you want archived to a Container Template group with the "Archive containers" field selected and the "Retention period" field filled out.
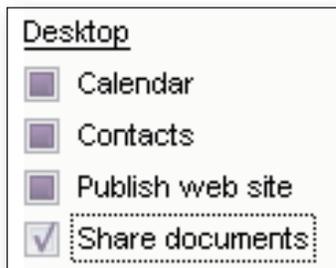
Archive Services Cont'd

The archiving of multi-user calendar events is controlled by selecting the "Archive group calendar events" checkbox on the Services tab of the appropriate group. Calendar events will be mixed in with messages and instant message transcripts when archived.

Authenticated Web Publishing

FirstClass has long had a user privilege for controlling whether or not a user was allowed to publish personal web pages to the outside world. This is useful, but it meant that if an organization didn't want certain groups of individuals to be able to publish content to the web (for reasons of security or privacy), then the "Web Publishing" application was of little use to those users.

In FirstClass 9.1, the meaning of the "Publish web site" privilege has not changed. However, the meaning of the "Share documents" privilege has been expanded to also control whether the user is allowed to share their personal web pages with other authenticated users on the same FirstClass system. This means that the Personal Web Publishing application can now be safely used as a powerful internal (or intranet-style) communication facility amongst members of the FirstClass online community. Employees can publish to other employees without management worrying that the public might have access to these web pages. Students can publish to other students without school administrators worrying that the resultant information is publicly visible.
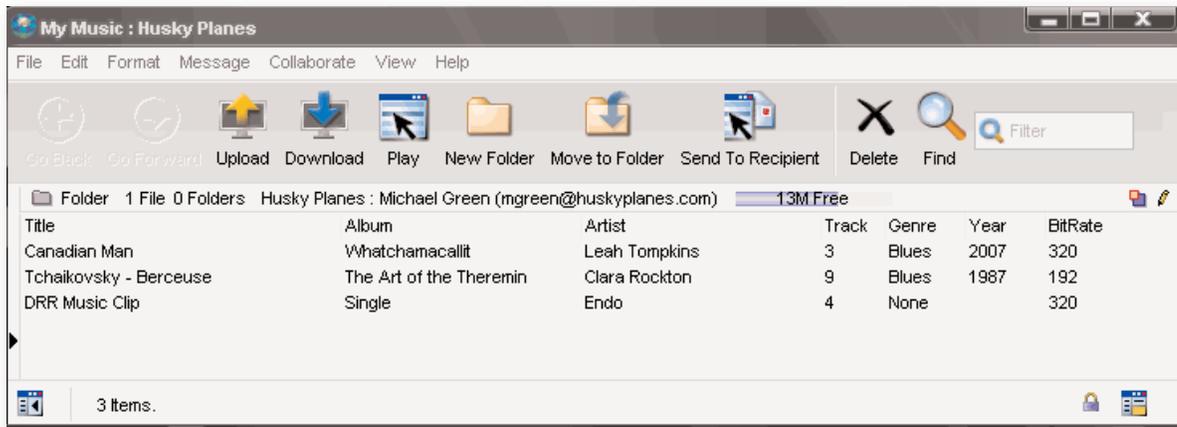
A secure authentication ticket scheme has been implemented so that an authenticated user using the FirstClass client can easily view other users' personal web pages in a browser without having to reauthenticate. See the FirstClass Client section of this document for more details on this.

An override facility has been implemented in Internet Services to enable system administrators to easily manage this at the system level should the need arise. See the Internet Services section of this document for more details.

Music Folder Container Template

A new container template has been added to the Group folder. When users create a new music folder in their File Storage containers, FirstClass will extract MP3 tags as column data.

Server Maintenance

Log Markers

The system administrator now has the ability to add a log marker (a horizontal line) to the console and log file. This provides an easy way to mark a portion of the console/log for later review. This new feature can be accessed through a new menu item on the server console (Log > Insert Marker In Log) or by pressing the "Insert Marker in Log" button on the status tab of the Server Control form. (added in the FirstClass 9.0 SP)

New in Internet Services
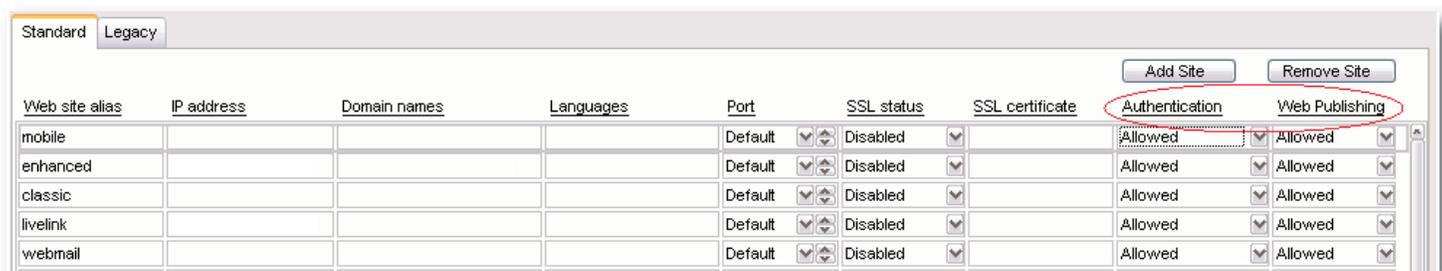
New Features

Global Signatures

Each Internet Services server that handles outbound SMTP now supports the option of a Global Signature, which is a piece of styled text that is appended as a signature to all outbound SMTP messages. This option is controlled through a new configuration document, called Global Signature, that is available in the Internet Services folder.

Web Site Access Controls

The Multiple Sites and Languages form has been extended with two new columns ("Authentication" and "Web Publishing") to provide a wide range of control options for authentication requirements and web publishing abilities on a per domain basis. This form can be used to implement an override of individual and group permissions if/when required.
In addition the SSL Status field now supports a "Login" option which indicates that secure logins are required for the authentication mode.
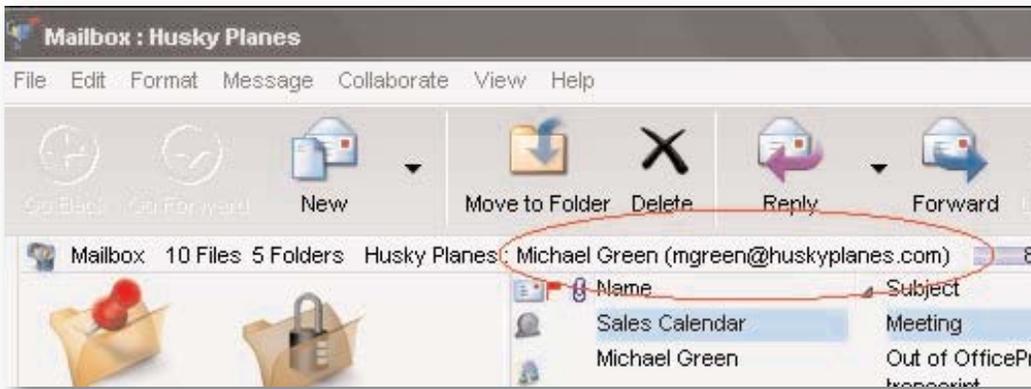
Advanced Help Information

More and more advanced IS information is being provided via FirstClass OnLine (FCOL) in Conferences > Peer to Peer Support > FirstClass Webmasters > FAQs. As an example of this, the HTTP Inbound API and HTTP Outbound API containers have been removed from the online help and are now available in the indicated location on FCOL.

New in FirstClass Client

Changes to Appearance

Primary Email Address Display

Each user's primary email address is now displayed in the summary bar in the Mailbox view. This feature is intended to reduce the number of calls to system administrators from users who have forgotten what their email address is.

Enhanced Applications

Calendars

Printing
When you print the Week view or Today list view for your calendar, you now have the option to print tasks and punch-through items.

Transparent Color Option for Punch-through Calendars
This has been enhanced with a new right-click option called "transparent" that, when chosen, displays the events of the selected calendar in the specific color they have in their original calendar

Enhanced Calendar Import/Export
Support has been added in for importing and exporting .ics calendar items.

Message Auto-reply Management

If a user has an auto-reply message currently active they will see a small popup window appear in the bottom right corner of their screen (illustrated below) each time they connect to their FirstClass server. This popup window will automatically disappear after a few seconds. While the popup window is displayed it offers a shortcut that enables the user to turn off their auto-reply by simply clicking the appropriate button.
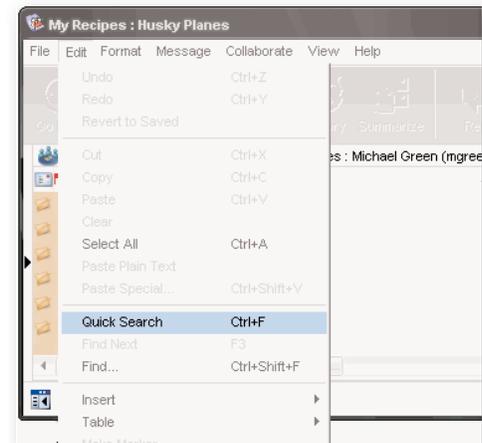

Immediate Updates to Messages Across Multiple Logins

Users who are logged in more than once no longer have to log in again to see changes that were made in another login session. For example, messages that are deleted or moved in one location will reflect the change in every session that's logged in.

Searching

The Quick filter search field that was introduced in FirstClass 9.0 is now on all container toolbars as a default. This option also has a keyboard shortcut and menu item that lets you move to this field quickly.

Editing

Support for Bullets
You can now apply bullets to your text and format them as desired. You can access this option from the toolbar or the Format menu. You can set spacing, symbols, font, color, and so on.
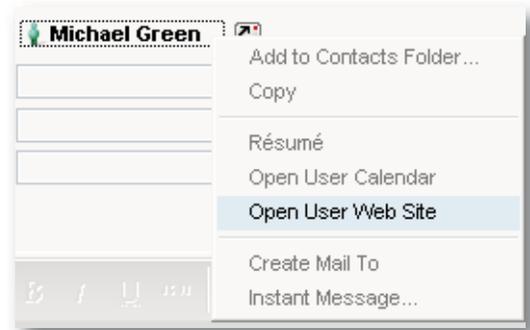

Enhanced Spell Checking
The spell check feature has also been enhanced to check the envelope in addition to the body content.

Quick Personal Web Site Access

FirstClass personal web publishing has been significantly enhanced in recent releases. However it was still somewhat difficult to access other users' personal web pages on the system. This has been addressed in FirstClass 9.1 with the new "Open User Web Site" option that appears in the menu when right-clicking on a user's name. When selected, this option launches a web browser window with the appropriate URL to display the indicated user's personal home page.

Auto Deletion of Empty Messages

When a user creates a new message and then closes it without making any changes the message will automatically delete.

New in Enhanced Web Interface

Additional Client-like Behavior

The FirstClass Enhanced Web Interface is designed to deliver a user interface that is similar to that of the FirstClass Client. This makes it an ideal choice for use by FirstClass Client users when they only have access to a web browser (such as in an internet cafe or a web kiosk). In FirstClass 9.1, the Enhanced Web Interface has been significantly improved through an extensive application of AJAX technology to now deliver many more client-like capabilities. These include:

- Tables can now be created in the web interface.
- Context menus (right-click on Windows or ctrl-click on Mac) are now available for most objects.
- FirstClass Client sounds are now available with the web interface (new mail sound, new calendar event sound, new conference item sound).
- FirstClass Client keyboard shortcuts are now supported.
- Icons can be moved one pixel at a time.
- Objects can be dragged to move, copy, or link them.
- Multiple objects can be selected by dragging a rubber band selection box over them.
- Objects can be opened in separate windows.
- Information for closed objects can be changed directly by highlighting the object and clicking Properties.
- Objects can be directly renamed in the tree view area.

Presentations

Presentations created with the FirstClass Client can now be displayed in the Enhanced Web Interface.

Messages

A Create Mail To button has been added to contact forms and mail list forms. This lets you create a message addressed to the selected contact.

Calendars

FirstClass web calendars support an iCalendar "feed" that lets web site viewers subscribe FirstClass calendars to their calendar programs. To accomplish this, an iCal button is added to each FirstClass web calendar when it is viewed via the web (added in the FirstClass 9.0 SP).

Web Publishing

Like FirstClass Client users, connected Enhanced Web Interface users can now access other users' internal web sites without having to authenticate again.