eZ Flow

# User Guide

**version 1.0**

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# 1. Introduction

eZ Flow is an extension to eZ Publish that has extended functionality for handling the flow of content publication over time, specifically the rotation and placement of content on frontpages. Typical usage is a newspaper frontpage or managing a TV station's portal. eZ Flow is ideal in situations where content changes quickly and there are many changes per day. eZ Flow is design to enable editors to plan the "flow" of content on these pages.

## *1.1. Target audience*

This document explains how to use eZ Flow to create frontpages and portals, and is appropriate for site editors. For information about configuring eZ Flow, refer to the Configuration Guide. For general information about adding and editing content on an eZ Publish site, refer to either the Website Interface or the Administration Interface documentation.

## *1.2. Conventions*

- Code samples, functions, variable names, and on are printed in `monospace font`.
- Filenames and paths are printed in *`monospace italic font`*.
- Commands are printed in **`monospace bold font`**.
- Elements of graphical user interfaces (such as buttons and field labels) are printed in **bold font**.
- Component names (such as an application) are capitalized, for example "Administration Interface".
- In sample URLs, replace "example.com" with the domain name of your site.
- The screenshots in this document might have been modified to fit the page or to illustrate a point, and therefore might not exactly match the display on your site.

## *1.3. More resources*

For assistance with eZ Publish, refer to the following resources:

- **eZ Publish documentation**: eZ Find is an extension to eZ Publish. Where appropriate, there are links in this document to the online versions of the eZ Publish documentation, located at http://www.ez.no/doc.
- **eZ Publish forums**: The forums on the eZ Systems website are a valuable community-driven resource, where eZ Publish users provide assistance and support to each other. Accessing the forums is free. The forums are located at http://ez.no/community/forum.
- **Support from eZ Partners**: eZ's global network of partners provides professional assistance for all eZ products. To find a partner, contact sales@ez.no.
- **Other eZ solutions**: For information about other solutions provided by eZ Systems, refer to http://ez.no/products/solutions.
- **Training and certification**: eZ Systems and eZ Partners offer training courses and certifications for eZ Publish. Contact sales@ez.no or visit http://ez.no/services/training for more information.

## 1.4. Contacting eZ

For non-technical questions regarding eZ Publish or eZ Systems, please contact us:

- http://ez.no/company/contact
- info@ez.no

## 1.5. Copyright and trademarks

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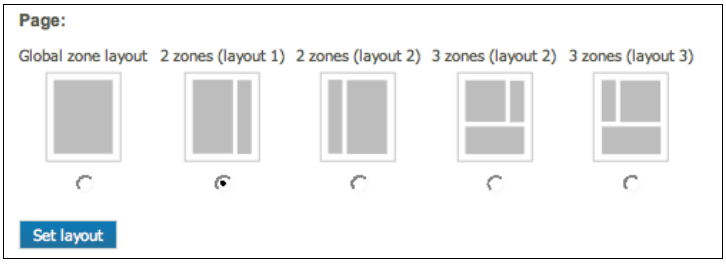
# 2. Zone and Block management

The eZ Flow extension provides a special interface for creating and editing “frontpage” content objects. The interface is displayed when you add or edit an eZ Publish frontpage. With eZ Flow, a frontpage is divided into “zones” (with placement and display properties defined according to the layout and the assigned templates). Each zone can contain one or more “blocks”, which are sub-areas configured to display specific content. (The configuration of layout, zones and blocks is described in the eZ Flow Configuration Manual.)

The editing interface for layouts, zones and blocks is shown below:

## *2.1. Zones*

By default, eZ Flow has five layouts configured and ready for use. The diagram below shows the selection interface with the pre-configured layouts.



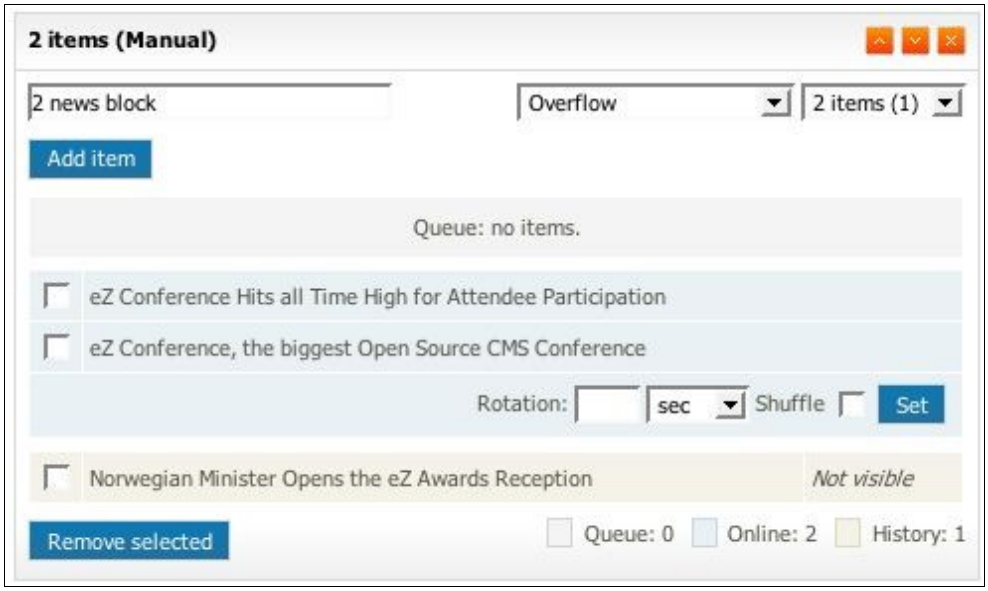

The **Global zone layout** is used to make a layout that is re-used on general objects. For example, a newspaper sight might have a list of the top stories on every article page.

## *2.2. Creating blocks*

To create a frontpage, an editor adds blocks within zones. Each zone is represented by a tab in the editing interface, as shown below.

After selecting the tab that corresponds to a zone, you can start adding blocks. This is done by entering the name of the block, choosing the type of block you want to create and then clicking the **Add block** button. (Instructions for creating custom block types are included in the eZ Flow Configuration Guide.)

Three listings are displayed for each block: **Queue** (grey background), **Online** (blue background) and **History** (brown background).




The **Queue** list shows the items that are planned for publication. For each item in the queue, you can specify the number of minutes that will elapse before the item is published.

The **Online** list shows the items that are currently published and visible to site visitors. Each zone has a maximum number of items that can be displayed at one time (based on the zone's configuration).

The **History** list shows the items that were previously published but are not currently visible. The number of items displayed in this list is based on the Zone's configuration.

### 2.2.1. Overflow

The number of items a block can display at one time is pre-configured. However, you can add an overflow rule that determines what happens when an item is no longer displayed within a block. The overflow drop-down gives you the choice of selecting any other block on the same page. When another block is selected, any item that is pushed from the online list will be moved to the queue of the selected block.

This feature enables you to have a flow of automatic content via the blocks defined on the frontpage.

### 2.2.2. Block templates

Multiple display styles may be available for a single block, depending on the configuration of the block type. The block template dropdown list shows the available styles for the given block. For example, a block for main stories might have two display variations as shown in the screenshots below:

*Main story with large image.*

*Main story with large automatically cropped image.*

The templates that are available for blocks are part of the block configuration, which is described in the eZ Flow Configuration Guide.

### 2.2.3. Automatic rotation

It is possible to configure a block so that items are automatically rotated from the queue at specified time intervals (entered in the **Rotation** field). (Items can also be randomly rotated by checking the **Shuffle** checkbox.)

This feature enables you to have the content on the frontpage automatically updated. This is useful if you run a news site and, for example, no editorial staff is at work during a weekend or holiday. Site visitors will get the impression that new content is published as the content on the page changes according to the specified time interval.

### 2.2.4. Block position

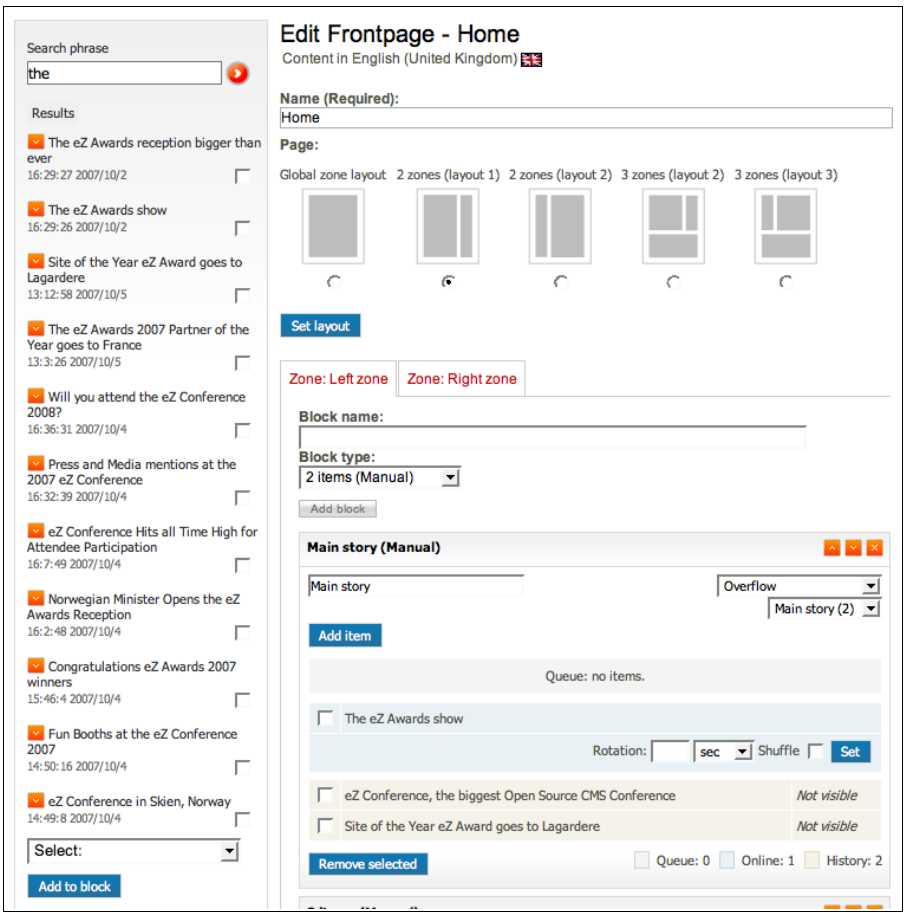
Blocks can be moved up and down to position them at the desired spot on the page. To move a block simply click the arrows to the right of the block title (in the upper right corner of the block). To delete a block, click the **x** button.

## *2.3. Adding content*

### 2.3.1. Adding content to a block

Once the blocks are defined you are ready to add items. This can be done in two ways: either click the **Add item** button (which displays a window for browsing the content tree) or use the search interface on the upper left side of the page.

To do a search, enter a search phrase in the **Search phrase** field and click the orange arrow next to the search field. The results of the search query will be shown beneath the search field. Click the checkboxes beside the items you want to add to a block, then select the block to which they will be added from the drop-down list. When finished, push the **Add to block** button.



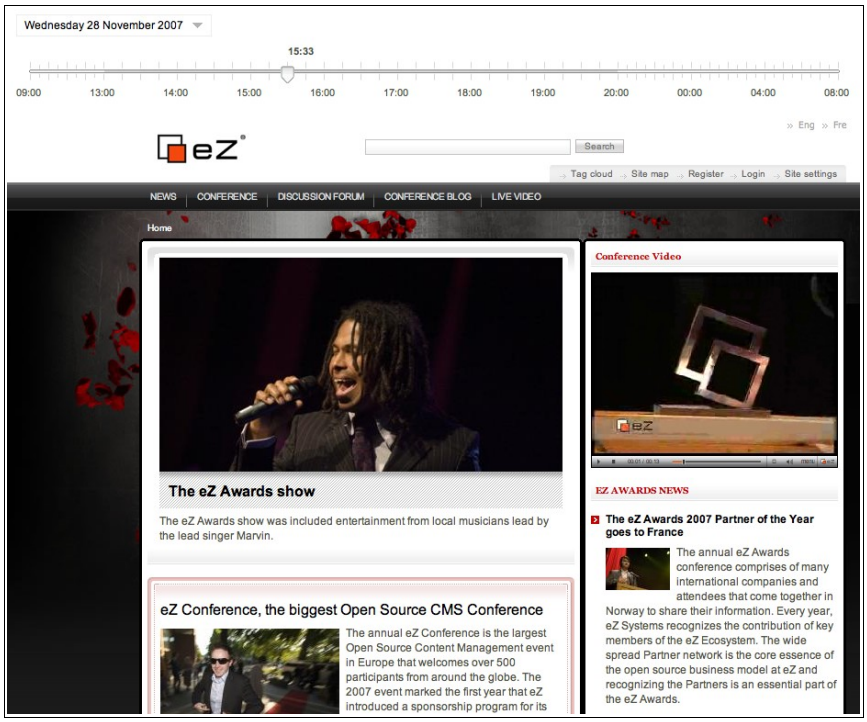

Items are initially added to the Queue. By default, they are scheduled for immediate publication, and will be moved into the Online section when you enable the changes by clicking the **Send for publishing** button. To set a different publication time for an item, enter the number of minutes (from the current time) that the item should be published in the field beside the item in the queue.

# 3. Timeline Preview

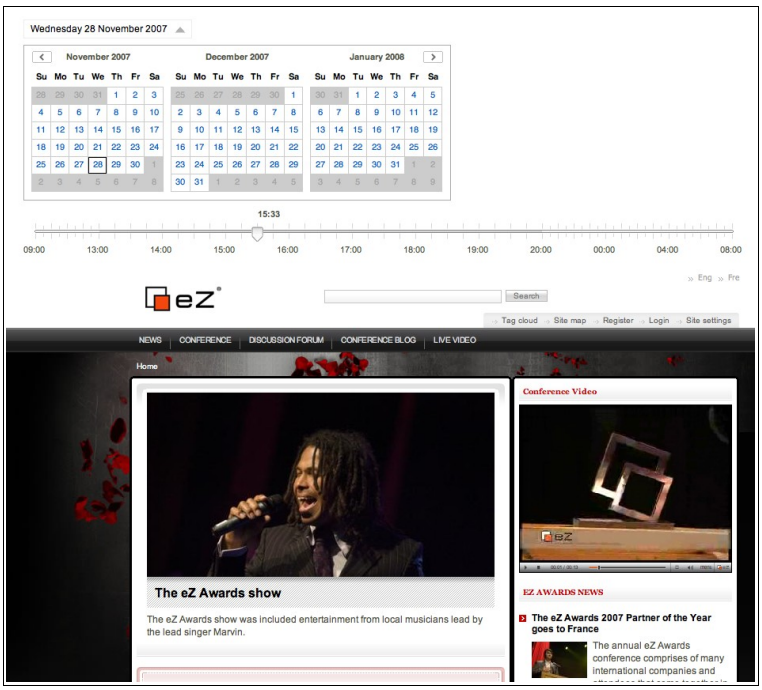
Because the contents of an eZ Flow frontpage change over time, eZ Flow provides a timeline preview that enables you to view the visitor's view of a frontpage at any point in time. To enable the timeline preview, click the button on the Website Toolbar:

The timeline preview will be displayed at the top of the page.

To select a specific time drag the slider to the desired position. The page will then automatically update with the content that is scheduled to be published at that time. The slider allows selection within a 24 hour period.




If preview outside of the 24 hour scale provided by the slider, click the date selection dropdown and choose the desired date from the calendar.


Wednesday 28 November 2007
November 2007
December 2007
January 2008
15:33
09:00 13:00 14:00 15:00 16:00 17:00 18:00 19:00 20:00 00:00 04:00 08:00
Search
Tag cloud Site map Register Login Site settings
NEWS CONFERENCE DISCUSSION FORUM CONFERENCE BLOG LIVE VIDEO
Home
The eZ Awards show
The eZ Awards show was included entertainment from local musicians lead by the lead singer Marvin.
Conference Video
EZ AWARDS NEWS
The eZ Awards 2007 Partner of the Year goes to France
The annual eZ Awards conference comprises of many international companies and