

HarePoint Discussion Board

For SharePoint 2010 / 2013 /2016



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1. Introduction

HarePoint Discussion Board provides forum and live comments options for site participants to discuss any topics. It allows real-time discussion by showing all new posts, replies and comments right as they are posted, without page reloading. The product uses the standard SharePoint discussion board under the hood to store all topics, so there backup, migration, or maintenance can be performed easily. On top of that, you can connect HarePoint discussion boards to any existing discussion boards on your portal and empower them with a great and modern user interface.

This manual has been produced by HarePoint and contains the essential information for the successful installation of HarePoint Discussion Board for SharePoint 2010 / 2013 / 2016 on your SharePoint Server. We kindly ask you to read this manual carefully before starting the installation process. This manual includes technical information regarding installation, upgrade and configuration of the product. It is intended for SharePoint administrators.

2. Quick Start

- a) Read <u>3.1. System requirements</u> and <u>3.2 Installation prerequisites</u> areas.
- b) Install the product as it described in 3.3 Installing HarePoint Discussion Board for SharePoint area.
- c) Add the HarePoint Discussion Board Web Part as it described in 4.1 Adding web part area.
- d) Create new Discussion Board as it described in 4.2 Creating a new Discussion Board area.

3. Installation

HarePoint Discussion Board comes with an automatic installer. It detects the Web Front-end servers in your Sharepoint farm and installs all necessary components to them.

Technically, HarePoint Discussion Dashboard is installed as a Farm Solution with name "harepoint.discussionboard.wsp". It is Core Solution containing its own resource files and global assemblies. The solution is deployed to all Web Front-end servers in the SharePoint Farm.

The **Site Collection feature** named "HarePoint Discussion Board Site Collection Activation" is added to all site collections. This feature is automatically activated on the site collections that were selected at the step 4 of the Installation Wizard. When the feature is activated, HarePoint Discussion Board web-part is listed in Web Part Gallery and it can be added to a web page of any of the web-sites in this Site Collection.

3.1. System requirements

HarePoint Discussion Board for SharePoint is designed to operate in:

- Microsoft SharePoint 2016
- Microsoft SharePoint 2013
- Microsoft SharePoint Foundation 2013
- Microsoft SharePoint Server 2010
- Microsoft SharePoint Foundation 2010

An Office 365 compatible version of HarePoint Discussion Board is available in Office App Store.

3.2 Installation prerequisites

Here is a list of items to be checked before starting the installation and deployment of the product.

- a) The latest version of the product is downloaded from HarePoint.com: http://www.harepoint.com/DownloadProducts/HarePointDiscussionBoard.zip
- b) The downloaded product ZIP is unzipped into the temporary folder on the SharePoint **Web front-end** server.
- c) The SharePoint farm is configured completely.
- d) The web-sites and SharePoint Central Administration web-site are working properly.
- e) **None** of **web.config** files are write-protected.

- f) Be sure to start the installation from the SharePoint **Web front-end server**.
- g) You have administrator rights for SharePoint servers (Farm admin account is preferred).
- h) Make sure that Administrative Service is started. The service name is "Microsoft SharePoint Foundation administrative service"
- i) Make sure that SharePoint Timer Service is started.

3.3. Licensing model and trial version limitations

The trial version has no limitations. However, if you would like to use HarePoint Discussion Board for SharePoint after the 30-day evaluation period, purchase and registration are required.

HarePoint Discussion Board for SharePoint licensing is Server-based - the object of licensing is Web Front End server (WFE). You need to license all WFEs in your environment. The number of users and Discussion Boards that you can create is unlimited.

Please refer to 5.1 Entering license key section for instructions on how to enter the license key.

3.4. Installing HarePoint Discussion Board for SharePoint

The product distributive contains the following files and folders:

Install – the folder contains a program library for the installation

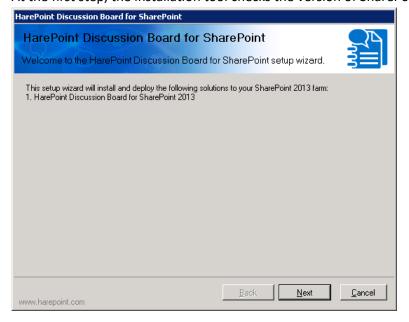
ReadMe.txt – this file includes short description about the version of the product which will be installed **installation.log** – this file is absent initially, it is created when the installation tool is started an it contains installation logs.

Setup.exe – executable file to start the installation tool

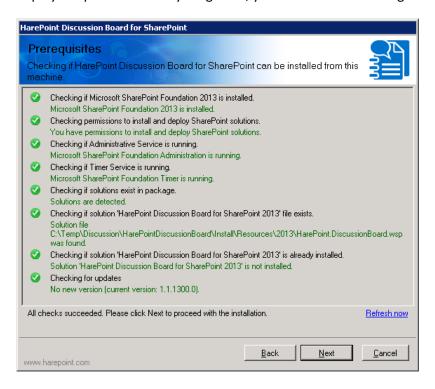
Setup.exe.config – XML file with the directions to the installation tool.

The installation and deployment are performed by a special tool. To start it, click file **Setup.exe.**

At the first step, the installation tool checks the version of SharePoint installed:



At the next step, the installation tool checks the necessary components and the permission to install and deploy the product. If everything is OK, you will see the following window:

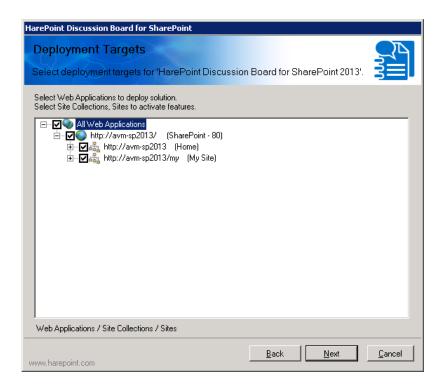


If you see a red mark in the list – you should fix the problem before continuing the installation.

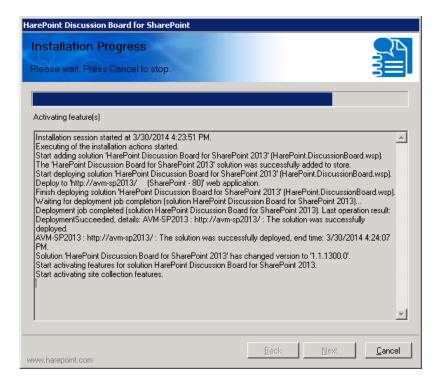
At the next step, you should read and accept the License Agreement:



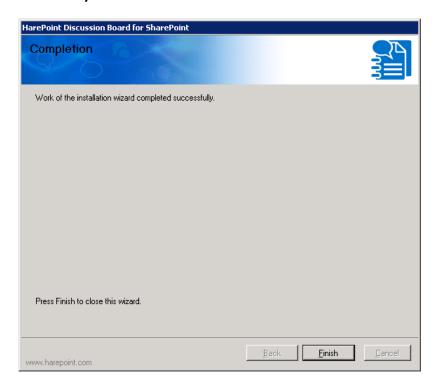
At the next step, you should select the target Web-applications and Site Collections where the product should be deployed and activated:



When you click "Next", the product installation and deployment will start. You will see the window with the status bar and deployment logs:



When the installation and deployment process is finished, you will see message "Installation completed successfully":



Click Next and Finish to exit the installation tool. The product is now installed and deployed.

3.5. Upgrading HarePoint Discussion Board for SharePoint

We are working permanently to improve the product and we strongly recommend you to use the latest available version of the product.

Before starting the upgrading process, please check the following:

- The latest version of the product is downloaded from HarePoint.com
 http://www.harepoint.com/DownloadProducts/HarePointDiscussionBoard.zip
- 2. The downloaded product ZIP is unzipped into the temporary folder on the SharePoint **Web front-end** server.
- 3. The SharePoint farm is configured completely.
- 4. The web-sites and SharePoint Central Administration web-site are working properly.
- 5. All **web.config** files are not write-protected.
- 6. You are starting the installation from the SharePoint **Web front-end** server.
- 7. You have administrator rights for SharePoint servers (Farm admin account is preferred).
- 8. Make sure that Administrative Service is started. The service name is "Microsoft SharePoint Foundation administrative service";
- 9. Make sure that SharePoint Timer Service is started.



The product distributive contains the following files and folders:

Install – the folder contains a program library for the installation

ReadMe.txt – this file includes short description about the version of the product which will be installed

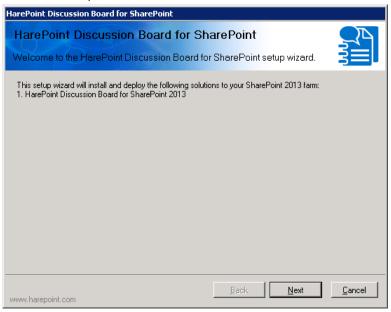
installation.log – this file is absent initially, it is created when the installation tool is started an it contains installation logs.

Setup.exe – executable file to start the installation tool

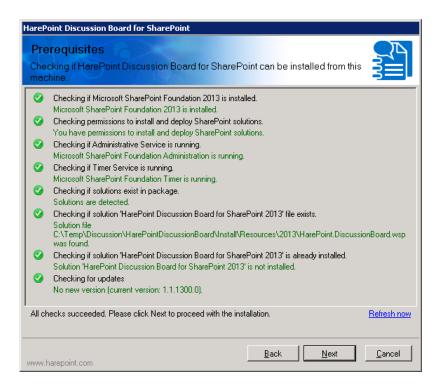
Setup.exe.config – XML file with the directions to the installation tool.

The installation, upgrading and removing of the product are performed by a special tool. To start it click file **Setup.exe.**

At the first step, the installation tool checks the version of SharePoint installed:

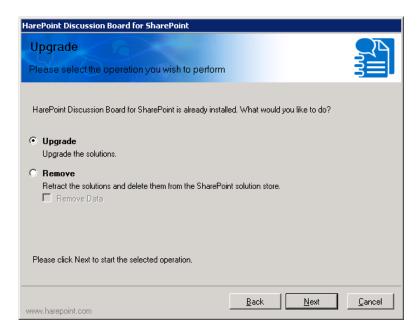


At the next step, the installation tool checks the necessary components and the permission to upgrade the product. If everything is OK, you will see the following window:

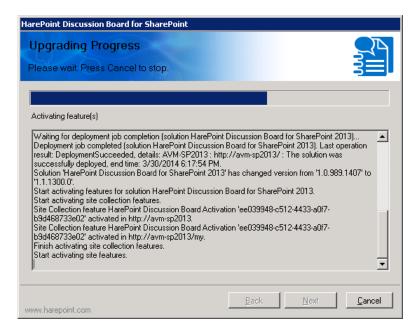


If you see a red mark in the list – you should fix the problem before continuing the installation.

At the next step select **Upgrade** and click the Next button:



When you click "Next", the upgrading process will start. You will see the window with the status bar and logs:



Click **Next** and **Finish** to close the wizard. The product is now upgraded.

All settings will be applied automatically, no further actions required.

3.6. Removing HarePoint Discussion Board for SharePoint

Before starting the removal process, please check the following:

- 1. You have the same version of the product distributive that is currently installed in your environment.
- 2. The product ZIP is unzipped into the temporary folder on the SharePoint **Web front-end** server.
- 3. The SharePoint farm is configured completely.
- 4. The web-sites and SharePoint Central Administration web-site are working properly.
- 5. All web.config files are not write-protected.
- 6. You are starting the installation tool from the SharePoint **Web front-end** server.
- 7. You have administrator rights for SharePoint servers (Farm admin account is preferred).
- 8. Make sure that Administrative Service is started. The service name is "Microsoft SharePoint Foundation administrative service";
- 9. Make sure that SharePoint Timer Service is started.

The product distributive contains the following files and folders:

Install – the folder contains a program library for the installation

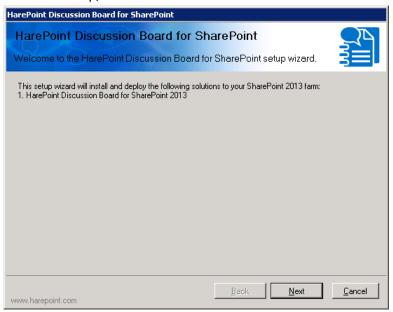
ReadMe.txt – this file includes short description about the version of the product which will be installed **installation.log** – this file is absent initially, it is created when the installation tool is started an it contains installation logs.

Setup.exe – executable file to start the installation tool

Setup.exe.config – XML file with the directions to the installation tool.

To start the installation tool to remove the product click file **Setup.exe.**

At the first step, the installation tool checks the version of SharePoint installed:

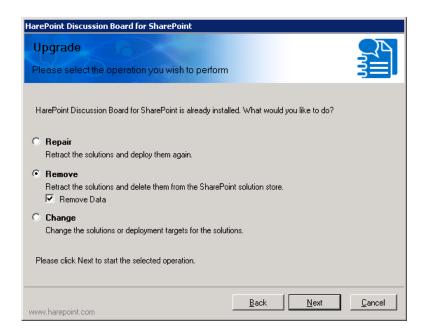


At the next step, the installation tool checks the necessary components and the permission to delete the product. If everything is OK, you will see the following window:



If you see a red mark in the list – you should fix the problem before continuing the installation.

At the next step select **Remove.** Additionally, if you do not plan to install the product again and you do not need to save data then mark "Remove Data" checkbox. Click the Next button:



The product removal process will start and you will see the window with the status bar and logs:



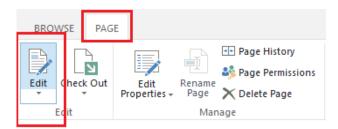
Click **Next** and **Finish** Buttons to exit the wizard. HarePoint Discussion Board for SharePoint is now **removed** from your system.

4. Using the product

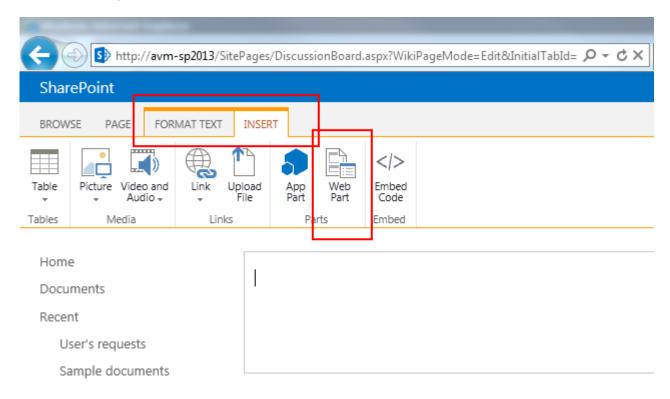
4.1. Adding a web-part

As soon as HarePoint Discussion Board is successfully installed and deployed, a new web-part is added to the web-part gallery on the site-collections that you have selected during the product installation.

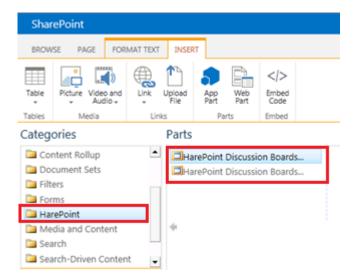
The HarePoint Discussion board web-part can be added to any web page on SharePoint web-sites. To do this, open the web-page in the browser and enter the page editing mode by clicking "Site settings – Edit page" option.



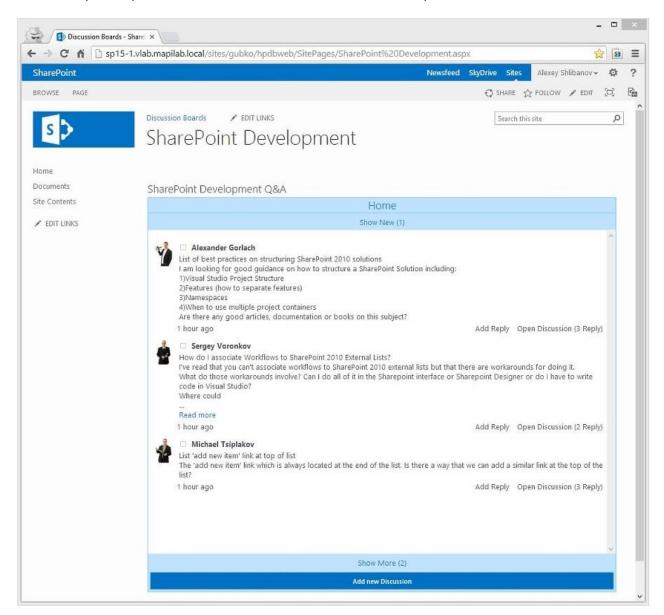
To add the web-part click "Insert" tab on the ribbon and click "Web Part" button:



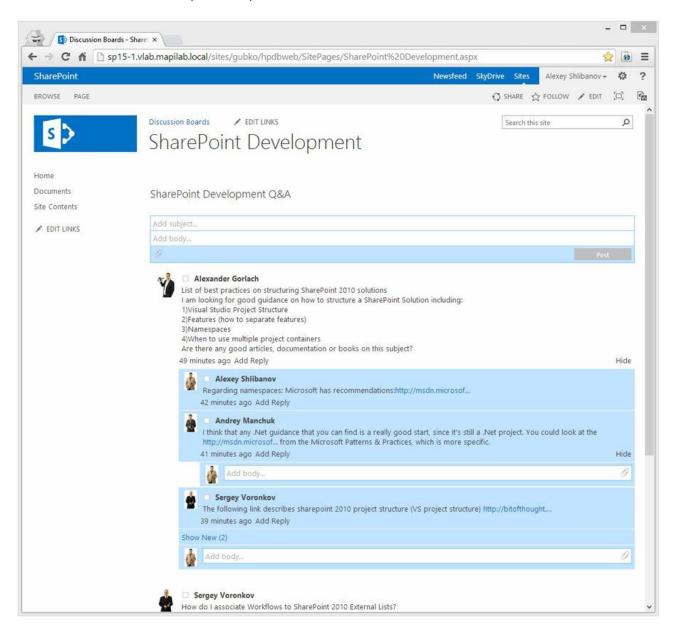
Scroll the list of web-part categories to "HarePoint" category and select one of two available Discussion Board web-parts:



These web-parts represent different views, the first one shows all topics one after another:



The second one shows the topic and replies as a tree view:



You can add both web-parts to the same page to see which one is better for you.

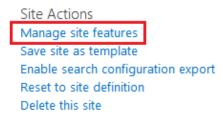
As soon as the Web Part is added, it should be connected to the data source. HarePoint Discussion Board stores data in standard SharePoint Discussion Board lists:

- If you're already using the standard one, you can empower it with great new interface allowing to see new posts in a real-time without refreshing of the web-page.
- If you do not have SharePoint Discussion Boards created yet, it can be easily done from the HarePoint Discussion Board web-part settings see next paragraph.

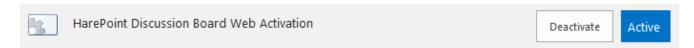
Note: In case if you get the message **Product is not activated on this web**, it means you would need to activate the site feature HarePoint Discussion Board Activation:

Product is not activated on this web

Access Site Settings – Site Actions – Manage site features:

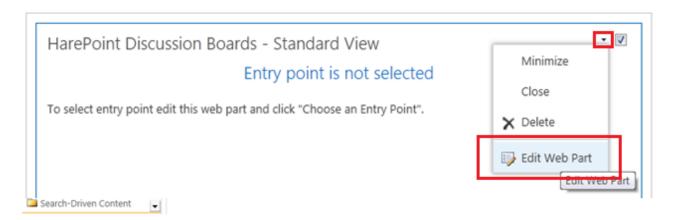


Click to activate the feature:



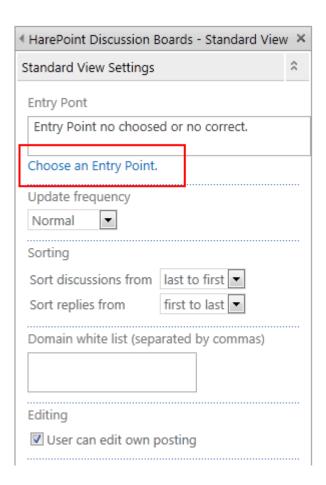
4.2. Creating a new Discussion Board

To create a new Discussion Board, open the web-part settings using "Edit Web Part" option:

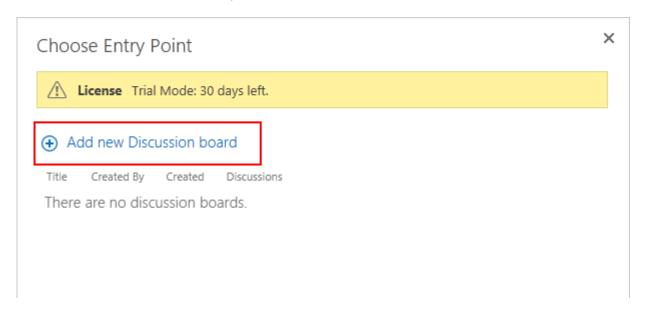


The main configuration option here is to **create a new Discussion Board** or to **assign an existing one** as the data source.

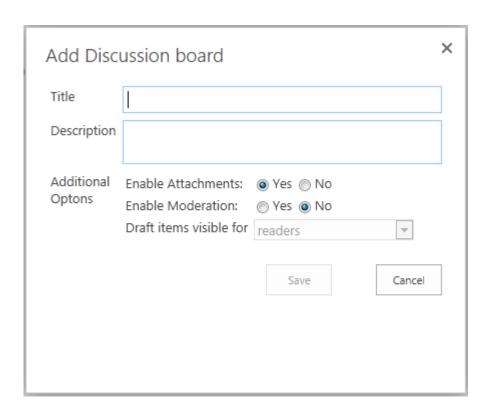
Click "Choose an Entry Point" option to open a dialog to add new Discussion Board:



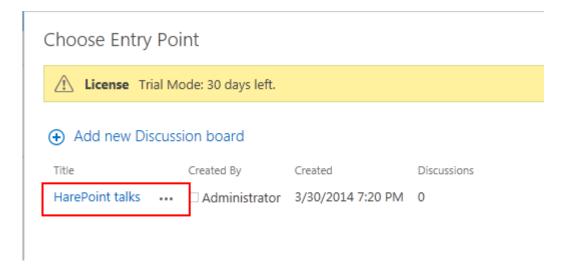
Click "Add new discussion board" option:



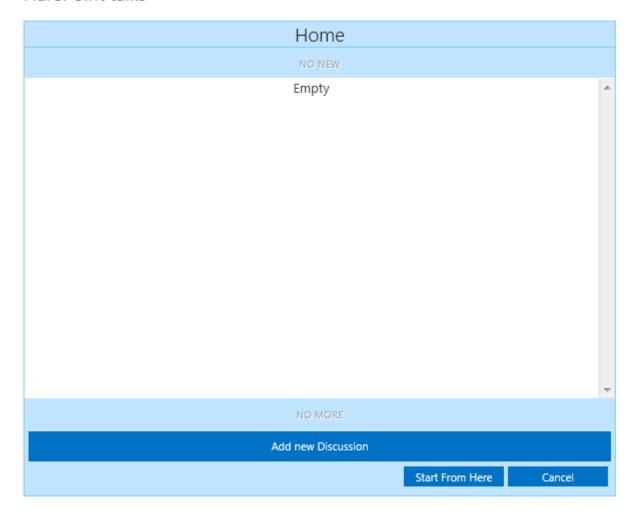
Fill the **Title** field and set the options as preferred (can be changed later):



As soon as new Discussion Board is created, you can select it to be displayed in this web-part by clicking on its title:



HarePoint talks



×

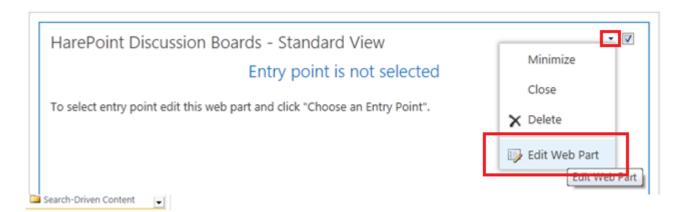
Since you are creating a **new** Discussion Board and it contains no discussions yet, simply click **Start From** Here Button.

Click **OK** in web part settings menu and then **Save** the page to apply the settings and exit the page editing mode.

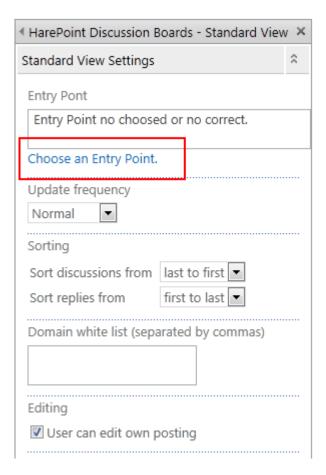
The web Part is now ready to use and you can try it. To add new discussion click the button Add new discussion, specify the subject and type a message.

4.3. Connecting HarePoint Discussion Board to an existing SharePoint Discussion **Board**

To use the existing Discussion Board as a data source, enter the page editing mode, then open the webpart settings using Edit Web Part option:

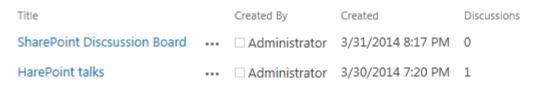


Click **Choose an Entry Point** option to add new Discussion Board:

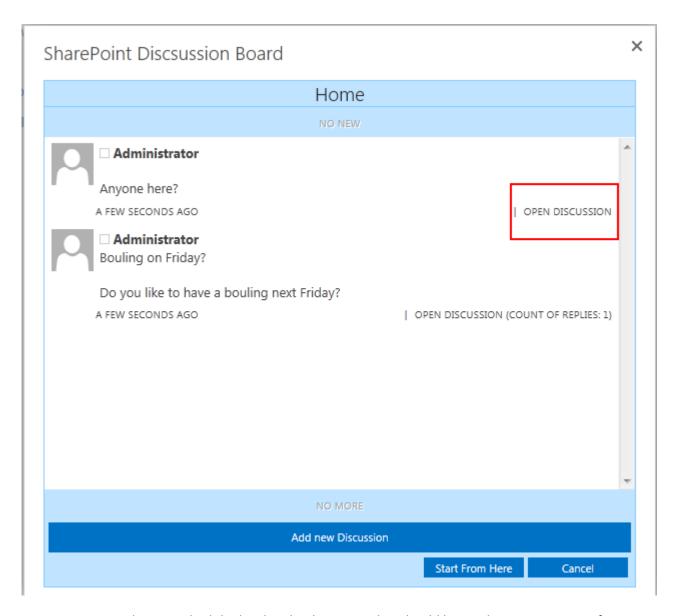


Click on the **title** of the existing Discussion Board to select it:

Add new Discussion board



It is possible to start from the root of the discussion, or the entry point can be in deep. To use the root hive as the entry point, click **Start from here** button, **OR** to use a deeper hive, click **Open discussion** link:

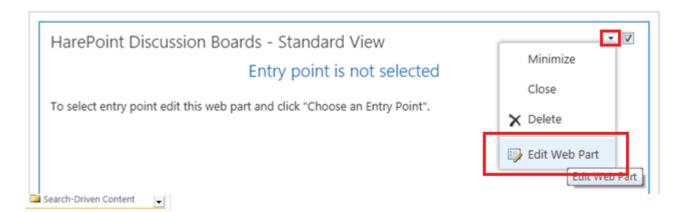


As soon as you have reached the level in the discussion that should be used as an entry point for new Discussion Board, click Start from here button.

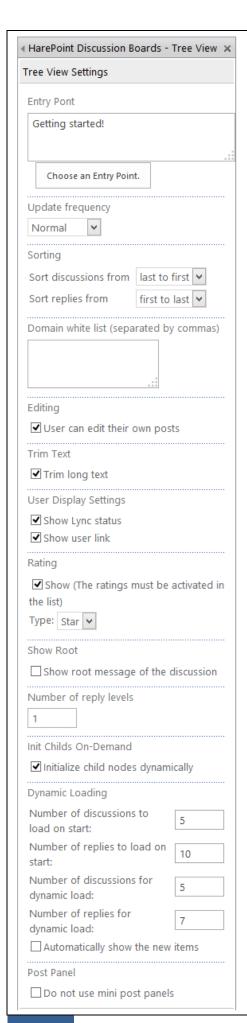
Click **OK** in web part settings menu and then **Save** the page to apply the settings and exit the page editing mode.

4.4. Configuring HarePoint Discussion Board Web Part appearance

To change the way the information is displayed in the web-part, enter the **web-page editing mode** and open the web-part settings using **Edit Web Part** option:



The available settings (both for Standard View and Tree View web parts) are described in the following table:



HarePoint Discussion Board Settings:

Data Source – allows you to select the SharePoint discussion board where the data will be saved.

Update frequency – choose how often the web-part should auto-update. Recommended setting is **Normal**.

Sorting – choose the sorting for discussions and replies.

Domain white list – type the domain names from which users are allowed to reply the topics. To specify multiple domains, use comma (,) as separator.

Editing – allow or prohibit users to edit their own posts.

Trim text – allow or prohibit the web-part to trim long text in the topics preview.

User display settings – choose what data about the user should be displayed to the participants. The web-part can show user status in the Lync as well as the link to SharePoint User profile (to see more details about the user).

Rating – enable or disable rating for posts. Two types available: *Star* and *Like*.

Important Note: Rating first need to be activated for the SharePoint Discussion Board list used under the hood, please read <u>4.7 Additional Settings and Options: Ratings or Likes</u> for more information!

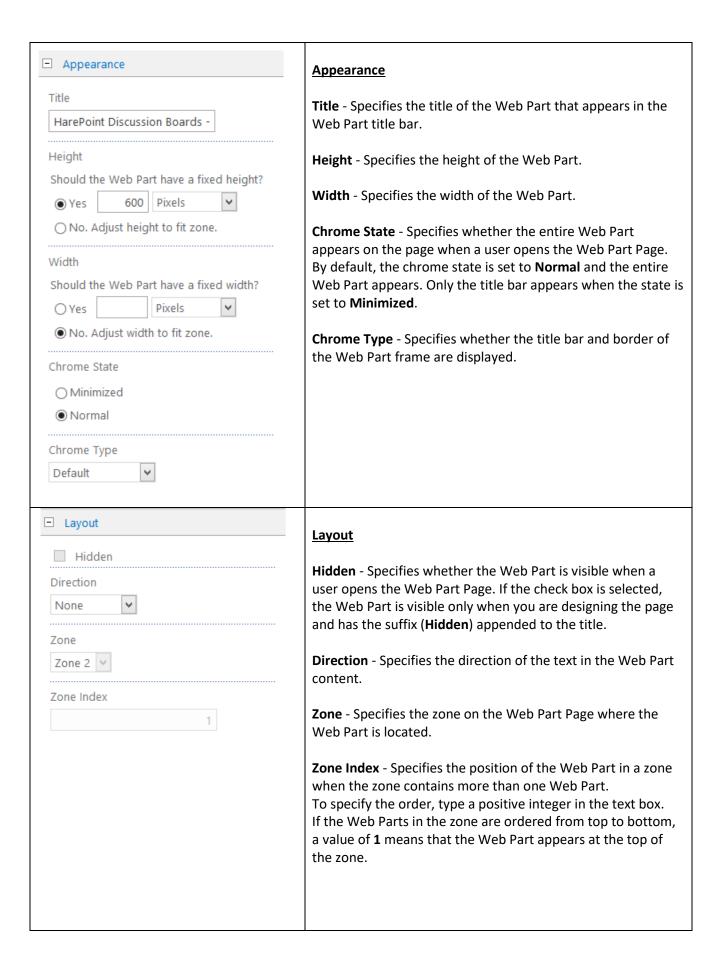
Show root (**Tree View** web part only) – choose whether to display root message of the discussion.

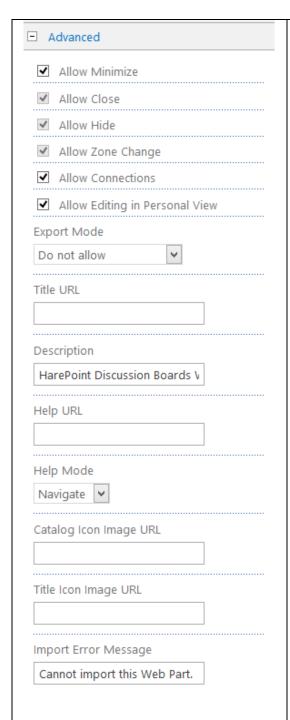
Number of reply levels (Tree View web part only) – specify how many reply levels should be displayed, as the web part is loaded

Init Childs On-Demand (Tree View web part only) – select whether to initialize child nodes dynamically (recommended), or upon wep part loading.

Dynamic loading – choose how many topics and replies will be displayed at the page loading.

Post panel (**Tree View** web part only) – select to use compact or full panels for posting replies.





Advanced

Allow Minimize - Specifies whether the Web Part can be minimized.

Allow Connections - Specifies whether the Web Part can participate in connections with other Web Parts.

Allow Editing in Personal View - Specifies whether the Web Part properties can be modified in a personal view.

Export mode - Specifies the level of data that is permitted to be exported for this Web Part.

Title URL - Specifies the URL of a file containing additional information about the Web Part. The file is displayed in a separate browser window when you click the Web Part title.

Description - Specifies the ScreenTip that appears when you rest the mouse pointer on the Web Part title or Web Part icon.

Help URL - Specifies the location of a file containing **Help** information about the Web Part.

Help Mode - Specifies how a browser will display Help content for a Web Part.

Catalog Icon Image URL - Specifies the location of a file containing an image to be used as the Web Part icon in the Web Part List. The image size must be 16 by 16 pixels.

Title Icon Image URL - Specifies the location of a file containing an image to be used in the Web Part title bar. The image size must be 16 by 16 pixels.

Import Error Message - Specifies a message that appears if there is a problem importing the Web Part.

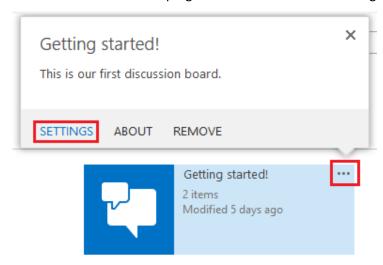
4.5. Setting up Discussion Board to receive e-mails

Since HarePoint Discussion Board stores data in a standard Sharepoint Discussion Board list, it allows Administrator to enable this list to receive e-mail. This feature allows the participants to post messages by sending e-mail messages. The message should include **the e-mail address assigned to the Discussion Board** in "**To:**" or "**Cc:**" fields.

As **one of the possible scenarios**, the participants can share the information not only by means of e-mail messages, but also by posting to Discussion Board. To achieve this, simply add the e-mail address assigned to the Discussion Board to a distribution list, so the Board will receive/send the messages from/to all the members of this distribution group.

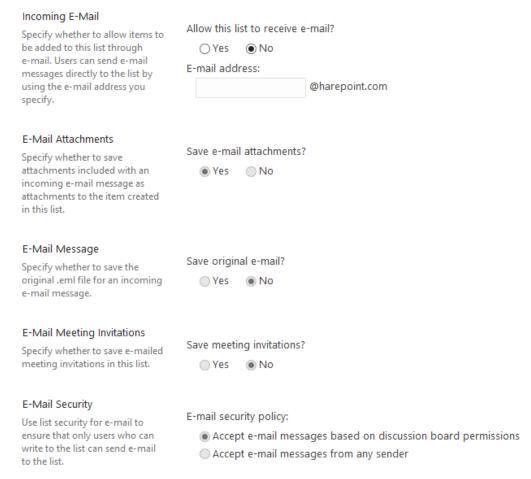
Follow these steps to enable this functionality:

- Click -> Site Contents on this SharePoint Site (for SharePoint 2010: Site Actions -> All Site Content)
- Locate the Discussion Board that you need to e-mail enable
- Click on in the top right corner and access its settings:



- Click Incoming e-mail settings
- Specify the settings accordingly:

Settings Incoming E-Mail Settings ©



4.6 Managing Discussion Boards

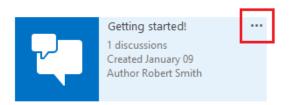
It is possible to manage HarePoint Discussion Boards from **Site Settings – Site Administration – Manage HarePoint Discussion Boards**:

Site Administration
Regional settings
Site libraries and lists
User alerts
RSS
Sites and workspaces
Workflow settings
Site Closure and Deletion
Manage HarePoint Discussion Boards
Term store management
Popularity Trends

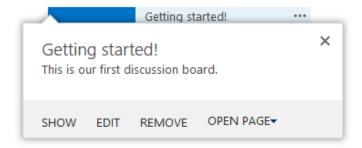
HarePoint Discussion Boards - Manage View HarePoint Discussion Boards



In order to access settings for a Discussion Board, click on icon in the **top right corner** of this Discussion Board:



The menu with available options will pop up:

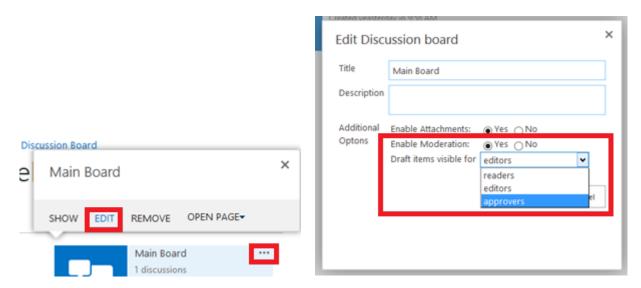


4.7 Additional settings and options

Using Moderation

Moderation can be enabled for posts, so they will become visible for users only after they have been approved by the Moderator (Approver).

Moderation can be enabled or disabled in Discussion Board settings:



Normally, the draft (pending) items should be set to be visible for approvers.

However, you might need to make editors to be able to approve/reject items as well.

Please note that if you select '**readers'** for this setting, pending items will be visible to **all users**, so moderation would make no sense. Yet this is available for troubleshooting purposes and compatibility with standard SharePoint Discussion Boards.

Permissions are described in the <u>next Section</u>.

Important: Do not modify versioning settings for HarePoint Discussion Boards in SharePoint, as this would cause an improper functioning of the Product. The correct versioning settings are selected automatically every time when moderation is re-enabled.

When a new post is added, it is visible for Approver only (can be changed in the settings, as described earlier). The post will have a Pending status:



Approver should either approve it, so others can see it, or reject, so it will remain invisible.

Approved posts can also be rejected at any time later.

Assigning Permissions for moderation

Readers, **Editors** and **Approvers** are set using the **Site Permissions** in SharePoint:

Permissions: ☐ Full Control - Has full control. ☐ Design - Can view, add, update, delete, approve, and customize. ☐ Edit - Can add, edit and delete lists; can view, add, update and delete list items and documents. ☐ Contribute - Can view, add, update, and delete list items and documents. ☑ Read - Can view pages and list items and download documents. ☐ View Only - Can view pages, list items, and documents. Document types with server-side file handlers can be viewed in the browser but not downloaded. ☐ Create new subsites - Can create new subsites

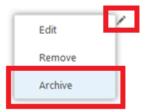
Readers – should have **Read** permission only.

Editors – should have **Read** and **Edit** permissions.

Approvers – Should have **Read**, **Edit** and **Design** permissions.

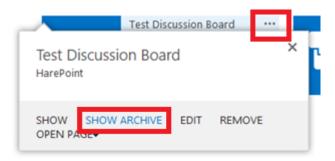
Archiving Discussion Boards

Discussion Board can be archived. In the menu, click the link **Archive**:



The discussion will be moved to archive.

To view the archive, use **Show Archive** link from Discussion Board menu:



Ratings or Likes

It is possible to enable ratings for posts, two types available:

Stars:



Likes:

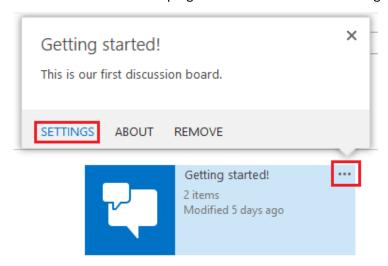


Ratings are enabled in two steps:

Step1

Since this is based on a standard functionality of SharePoint Discussion Board list, the respective setting should be turned on in SharePoint first. Follow these steps:

- Click -> Site Contents on this SharePoint Site (for SharePoint 2010: Site Actions -> All Site Content)
- Locate the Discussion Board that you need to enable rating for
- Click on in the top right corner and access list settings:



- Click on Rating settings
- Change the settings as required and click **OK**:

Settings - Rating Settings

Rating settings Specify whether or not items in this list can be rated. When you enable ratings, two fields are added to the content types available for this list and a rating control is added to the default view of the list or library. You can choose either "Likes" or "Star Ratings" as the way content is rated. Allow items in this list to be rated? Yes Which voting/rating experience you would like to enable for this list? Likes Star Ratings

Step 2

Access the web part settings and change the settings as required:



Note: the rating type (*Like* or *Star*) setting for HarePoint Discussion Board web part **overrides** the SharePoint Discussion Board settings, so you can manage rating types from web part settings only.

Please refer to <u>4.4. Configuring HarePoint Discussion Board Web Part appearance</u> for more details on web part configuration.

5. Licensing

When the product is installed for the first time, it works in a **Trial mode**. There are **no limitations** during the trial period (30 days). To continue using the product after the trial period has expired, it is necessary to **enter the license key**, as described further.

5.1 Entering license key

Access the **root** site of the site collection where HarePoint Discussion Board Web Part is added, go to the

-> Site Settings (in SharePoint 2010

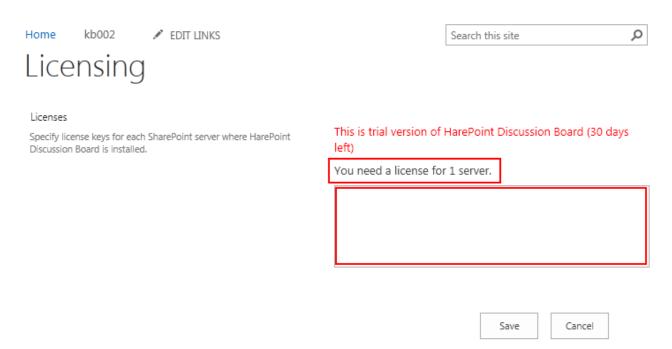
Site Actions -> Site Settings) and click HarePoint Discussion Board

Licensing:

Site Collection Administration Recycle bin Search Result Sources Search Result Types Search Query Rules Search Schema Search Settings Search Configuration Import Search Configuration Export Site collection features Site hierarchy Site collection audit settings Audit log reports Portal site connection Content Type Policy Templates Site collection app permissions Storage Metrics Site Policies HarePoint Discussion Board Licensing Popularity and Search Reports Content type publishing HTML Field Security Help settings SharePoint Designer Settings Site collection health checks

Site collection upgrade

This page allows you to find out more about the required number of license keys and manage them:



Important note: the **license key is case-sensitive**; so be careful when entering it. It is recommended to use copy-n-paste Clipboard feature to avoid mistyping.

Appendix A. Troubleshooting

If you experience any issues, or need assistance with HarePoint Discussion Board, please contact HarePoint technical support (http://www.harepoint.com/Support).