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## Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by akky - 2008/09/01 21:35

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Have question 'pools' been considered?

Basically you create questions and groups of questions, then when you create a survey you import them from a list already stored in the database.

Steve

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by EIMatador69 - 2008/09/01 21:50

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You can export groups and questions as a .csv file and import them, but there is no pool inside LimeSurvey; you have to store the groups in your filesystem.

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by holch - 2008/09/01 22:52

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I think this is a good idea. Business survey software like Globalpark offers library of questions, where you can save stuff like standard questions, standard error other survey messages, scales, etc.

For fast work on surveys it would be an advantage over saving questions to csv and import them again (e.g. no preview, etc.).

Regards.

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by EIMatador69 - 2008/09/01 22:56

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You are right, it would be more comfortable ==> Feature request for v2;

Some things are already there:

# Copy Questions

# Copy Conditions

# Reusable Labelsets

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by akky - 2008/09/01 23:04

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Holch is right, when you are doing large amounts of questions it is better to have a 'pool' rather than having to import information. Yes you could import, but why not to a 'pool' rather than a survey.

Steve

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by jsonin - 2008/09/03 06:45

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Yes - question libraries and pools are a big part of v2. Reusing questions from survey to survey is fine if you just want to capture the question type and data again.

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But instancing the same question AND answer (the same data in the answers) from survey to survey is dangerous... that isn't in the works for v2.

-Juhan

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by Mazi - 2008/09/08 15:06

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Hi Juhan,  
can you explain why you consider instancing questions AND answers dangerous?

In general I think that creating pools is a very nice feature which improves limesurvey's look and feel.

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by jsonin - 2008/09/08 15:17

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Creating a question library has been part of the plan since day 1.  
Reusing the same exact questions in multiple surveys (and the answers are all tied together in the system - fill that one question out in one survey and it's automatically answered in another survey) is nutty.

Issues:

- \* updating the question is hairy
  - \* context matters
- etc etc.

Need me to go deeper?

-Juhan

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by Mazi - 2008/09/08 16:21

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Maybe we are talking about different answers. I mean pre-defined answers. Are you talking about the users' answers/choices?

When copying a question and answers you have to assign new IDs of course. Then you can use the question AND the pre-defined answers in several surveys.

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by akky - 2008/09/10 21:46

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I'm not sure how and if you are looking at doing question pools, but on my test machine I have created an odbc link to the database and have experimented in placing questions in a group that doesn't exist, for example with a group id of 0.

When going into the site, the question doesn't appear, meaning I can add loads of questions and leave them out if needed.

My coding skills are in VB and not php, so I'm not sure if it could be done this way, or is there another way.

It's a crude way to get it to work.

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Steve

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by Mazi - 2008/09/11 20:27

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Have you done this with limesurvey and by editing data directly in the database?

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by akky - 2008/09/11 23:12

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it's a crude way to do it but it works.

i would expect the data to be loaded with sql statements, so by changing the gid in the questions table to a gid that doesnt exist in the parent table, you end up with orphan records.

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by Mazi - 2008/09/12 12:16

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Once more, I don't really understand what you did:

Have you done this with limesurvey and by editing data directly in the database?

If so do you think it's worth to put this to the workarounds so other users can benefit from your solution?

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by akky - 2008/09/13 19:10

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Sure thing I'll get something together for early next week.

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by akky - 2008/09/16 00:05

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it might take me a day or so, having probelms registering for the wiki

Steve

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by akky - 2008/09/16 00:32

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workaround, for anyone with a wiki login

Here is a simple solution to create question pools for Limesurvey.

It will require access to the backend database. I'm not going to explain how to do this, as if you don;t understand it, then you shouldn't really do it. Hopefully an option will appear in a new version.

Basically 3 tables exist that we care about

lime\_surveys - id field = sid  
lime\_groups - id field = gid  
lime\_questions id field = qid

In order to show the questions correctly the id field from the lime\_groups table exists in the lime\_questions table. This then is used to create the parent/child relationship.

However, if you want to create a pool of questions all you need to do is to amend the gid field in the LIME\_QUESTIONS table to a value that doesn't exist in the lime\_groups table. I would use 0 or a something silly like 10000. Try this with one question and you will notice it doesn't appear in the question list.

It's a crude workaround, but allows you to create as many questions as you want, without having them visible.

This could also be applied for groups as well just by using the sid field in the lime\_groups table.

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by Mazi - 2008/09/16 10:56

I have added this to the manual. Thank you very much for your help and cooperation!

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by akky - 2008/09/16 22:44

thx,

I take it from that, you understand where I was coming from?

I have an idea of how it can be implemented.

On the edit survey screen where you have the languages list boxes, use the same sort of screen as that.

grab all questions that aren't members of groups to form the contents of the list box.

hit add button to move them over

update button runs sql update query to amend the gid field to the currently selected group.

It's a shame my php is not so good, I could do it in VBA quite easily for you....

Steve

Steve

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by Mazi - 2008/09/17 11:17

Thanks for these instructions. Problem is that all our developers suffer a huge workload.

Nevertheless I would like to ask you to add your solution as a feature request to the bugtracker so we might be able to implement this later.

BTW: Are you interested in joining the development team? We are always looking for fresh blood ;)

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by akky - 2008/09/17 22:05

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thanks for the offer, whilst I enjoy developing access databases, I'm not sure if I can make the crossover to php. I'm self taught, complete with bad habits.

Steve

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by kip - 2008/10/15 16:16

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Sorry for replying to this older posting...

EIMatador69 wrote:

You are right, it would be more comfortable ==> Feature request for v2;

Some things are already there:

# Copy Questions

# Copy Conditions

# Reusable Labelsets

Wow... I'm really looking forward to seeing this. Instead of using question pools, you might even think of "dynamic" surveys (but on the other hand, maybe we're talking about the same).

We're currently using LS as an evaluation tool for courses (in education & training). Today I have a couple of dozen equal surveys running, the only difference between them is the title of the survey.

One way is to think of it as a master survey with some additional variables (similar to the language variable in LS). In my classroom / course setting a instructor / admin would set up a generic survey for all courses (questions etc.) and a list of all courses (as a variable). When inviting the students, the variable would be included as an additional variable in the token table or as an additional parameter in the URL like the language parameter:

../index.php?sid=12345&newtest=Y&lang=en&var=math

../index.php?sid=12345&newtest=Y&lang=en&var=physics

../index.php?sid=12345&newtest=Y&lang=en&var=chemistry

OR...

Another way is, that LS would accept preset responses encoded in the URL... In the same setting as before: I set up a generic survey for all courses / classes.

The first question (let's say question ID 123) in the survey would be "Which class / course do you want to evaluate?" with all courses in a list. If you include the question / response in the URL like...

../index.php?sid=12345&newtest=Y&lang=en&QID=123&response=chemistry

...the first question (ID 123) is omitted, because it's "answered" with the parameter included in the URL (chemistry). If this data is not included in the URL (../index.php?sid=12345&newtest=Y&lang=en), the student has to answer this question...

Hope it's clear what i meant ;o)))

Anyway... keep up you wonderful work...

Cheers

Antonios

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by Mazi - 2008/10/16 15:38

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Thanks for sharing your thoughts.

Regarding your second idea have a look at this section in the workarounds.

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by kip - 2008/10/16 17:49

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Mazi wrote:

Regarding your second idea have a look at this section in the workarounds.

Hey, that's brilliant!!! Perfect! Thanks a lot.  
You made my day!

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by Mazi - 2008/10/17 03:45

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You're welcome! If our hints have been helpful and you enjoy limesurvey please consider a donation to the team. We do all this in our free time and you don't have to pay a penny for this software.

Without your help we can't keep this project alive.

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by kip - 2008/10/17 12:47

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I'll do that... Promise

Cheers

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## Re:Feature - reuseable or stored questions

Posted by Mazi - 2008/10/17 13:25

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Thanks a lot!

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