Agora Project

The Collaborative Workspace

Introduction

Agora-Project is a workspace dedicated to collaboration and information exchange. Complete and intuitive, this tool is accessible via a simple web browser. Ideal for teamwork, it facilitate the exchange and creativity of a group around a common project, releasing the constraints of time and space.

Agora-Project is ideal for small structures such as associations, schools or SME, but is also suitable for larger organizations by allowing the establishment of subspaces.

Unlike services offered by big private companies, resources hosted on Agora-Project and the Omnispace service remain the property of their respective authors and are not the subject of commercial exploitation. This tool is therefore free of any advertising.

Agora-Project is licensed under GNU / GPL version 2. This program is a free software, under the terms of the GNU General Public License published by the Free Software Foundation : http://directory.fsf.org/wiki/License:GPLv2

Available modules

File manager

This is a module for storing and sharing files.
- Files are stored in a folder tree, similar to a computer file explorer.
- Each file can be historized to keep old versions.
- Several large files can be added in one click.
- Images can be displayed via a viewer and videos via an integrated player.

Calendar

Each space includes a shared calendar and each user has a personal calendar.
Shared calendars can be created to manage room bookings, equipment bookings, etc.
- Each event can be integrated to several calendars. Example : the *"meeting"* event can be assigned to the calendar of *Mr Smith, Mrs Durant* and of *the meeting room* calendar.
- Multiple calendars can be displayed simultaneously, eg to check availability of everyone before setting a meeting.
- Files can be attached to each event, for example to add the program of a meeting.
- The events of a calendar can be imported or exported for being added to an external calendar (*.ical*)

News

This module displays the latest news to the attention of your team. It can be used in the manner of a display panel. In addition, this module displays the current elements (events and tasks of the week / month), and the last elements created on your space (new files, forum posts, new users etc.).
- The news are layouts via an integrated text editor. You can add videos (Dailymotion, YouTube, etc.).
- Files can be attached to each news. Thus, images or mp4 videos can be directly integrated into your news
- The publication of news can be programmed (posting date), as well as archiving (offline date).

Task Manager

This tool enables the creation and sharing of tasks. It helps your team to be organized around a common project, segmented and prioritized in time (see timeline).
- Tasks are stored in a folder tree.
- Each task can have the following properties : date of start / end, priority, percentage of completion, responsible persons, etc.
- The tasks with a start date and end date are displayed in a timeline. We can thus quickly view the progress and duration of the tasks of a project. This view is similar to a Gantt chart.
- Tasks are layouts via an integrated text editor.
- Files can be attached to each task.

Forum

The forum is an effective way to exchange ideas with your team. It also avoids chaotic discussions by interposed mails, which often make us lose precious time.
- Messages are formatted via an integrated text editor.
- Files can be attached to each message.
- Messages can be grouped by theme.

Contacts directory

This tool allows the archiving and sharing of contacts: natural or legal persons.
- The contacts are stored in a folder tree.
- Contacts with an address can be displayed via Google Maps.
- Users are not contacts, but it is still possible to easily create a user from a contact.
- Files can be attached to each contact.

Space users

This module displays each user of the space, with details of their profile and their right of access to the space.
- Each user can send mail invitations to other people in purpose to join the space. This option can be disabled in space settings.
- Users with an address can be displayed on Google Maps.
- The general administrator can view all users and also change their profile.

Bookmark manager

This tool allows the archiving and sharing of web addresses (bookmarks). The addresses that you check regularly are accessible anywhere, any time.
- bookmarks are stored in a folder tree.
- Files can be attached to each bookmark.

Newsletters

This tool allows you to send newsletters by email to the members of your team and your contacts.
- Newsletters are layouts via an integrated text editor.
- Files can be attached to each newsletter.
- Note: This tool should be used sparingly to avoid spam arrivals

Messenger

The messenger is activated when you connect to your space. It is accessible from the main menu bar (top of page).
- This module is only displayed if another user is connected to your space at the same time.
- This tool allows instant conversation with two or more users.
- The Messenger can be disabled for the space or only certain users.

🔍 Search module

It allows a search of elements on the modules of the space. It is always accessible on the main menu bar: icon on the top left.

- The advanced search allows to filter results per module, date, etc.
- It is only possible to search elements that are available for us.

User, Administrator, Guest

- *Users* are persons who have an account on the space : they have a login and password to access the space.

- *Administrators* are users that can administer a space (or subspace). They can:
  ◦ Set their space : description, list of modules and associated options, wallpaper, etc.
  ◦ Edit all elements on their space (except the elements having a 'reading access' for their space and a 'writing access' for others spaces).
  ◦ Create new users accounts and import users via a CSV file.
  ◦ Send invitations by mail to add new users.
  ◦ Create and edit user groups.

- The *general administrators* are users who have all the rights to the collaborative space. They can:
  ◦ Create sub-spaces (see next paragraph).
  ◦ Create and edit all users and their assignment to sub-spaces .
  ◦ Manage General Settings: description, default language, style and logo, time zone, etc.
  ◦ Create backups of the collaborative workspace: database and files.

- *Guests* are people without user account (no login / password). They can access to spaces that are "public" (see space parameters).

Space and subspaces

Agora-Project is a collaborative space that can be divided into several spaces, also called subspaces. Examples:
- *MyUniversity* with sub-spaces *Professors, Administration, Students*, etc.
- *MyCompany* with sub-spaces *Technical service, Commercial Service, Management,* etc.

Agora-Project is flexible :
- There is no limit to the number of subspaces.
- Each user can be assigned to one or more subspaces.
- Each subspace can include one or more modules.
- Each subspace can be accessible to the public : to the guests. A password can be specified to access a public space.

Access Rights : generality

The content is organized hierarchically :   Modules → Containers → Elements
- Spaces are composed of Modules   → Files, Calendar, Forum...
  - Each module is composed of Containers   → folders, calendars, subjects...
    - Each Container have elements   → files, tasks, events of a calendar...

Each containers (folder, calendar, etc) has its own access rights. Similarly, access rights are applied to news and elements in a root folder (files, tasks, etc).

In the following example, the current New have a read access to all users and guests, and a write access to Louis Armstrong :

Note : if Louis Armstrong has a read access and all users have a write access, then Louis also have a write access. The highest right has therefore a priority.

User groups allow you to quickly manage the access rights of few people in a space. For example in a space called "students", a "Delegates of the class" group can be created.

Access Rights of Containers

The "*Total Access*" is reserved to the author of an element and administrators : it is an implicit right.

Access rights of folders :

- Read → display folder elements (files, tasks, etc)
- Limited write → idem + create new elements. Elements that a user has not created are not editable for him.
- Write → idem + edit all elements in the folder.
- Total Access → idem + edit the folder : access rights of the folder, name, description, etc.

Access rights of calendars :

- Read → display all events of a calendar
- Limited write → idem + create new events in a calendar. Events that a user has not created are not editable for him.
- Write → idem + edit all the events of a calendar.
- Total Access → idem + edit the calendar : access rights, name, description, etc.

Access rights of subjects of the forum :

- Read → display the subject and the messages associated.
- Limited write → idem + add messages. Messages that a user has not created are not editable for him. It's a default access right.
- Write → idem + edit all messages of the subject. Preferably for forum moderators.
- Total Access → idem + edit the subject : access rights, description, associated theme, etc.

Update and Install

Updates of Agora-Project on the Omnispace hosting service

The Omnispace hosting service includes automatic and regular updates of the Agora-Project software.
The following procedures only concern the independents installations of Agora-Project.

Update procedure (2.0 or newer)

- Verify that the server has a PHP Version 5.4 or newer
- If necessary, verify that the update is done on a standard version of Agora-Project, not a version customized / modified.
- Via the *General Settings* module of your space, click "Save the database and files" and check the integrity of the downloaded file. This backup allows a flashback in case of difficulty.
- Download the "MISE-A-JOUR_agora-project.zip" file and unzip the archive on your computer.
- Go to the web server directory, where is placed the old version of Agora-Project (via a FTP client if you use a hosting service).
- Remove files and folders of the old Agora-Project version → keep the "stock_fichiers" folder or "DATAS" folder !
- Add the following content of the Zip archive: the folders "app", "docs" and at last, the "index.php" file.
- If necessary, give a Read + Write + Execute access to the folders and files, and apply to sub-folders (recursion) : chmod -R 775.
- With your browser, go to the home page of your space: the update is instantaneous and a message appears to confirm the installation. Note that if necessary, the "stock_fichiers" folder is automatically renamed to "DATAS".

Procedure for initial installation

- Verify that the server has a PHP Version 5.4 or newer
- Download the "agora-project.zip" file and unzip the archive on your computer.
- Go to the web server directory, where your Agora-Project software will be placed (via a FTP client if you are using a hosting service).
- Add the following content of the Zip archive : the folders "app", "docs", "DATAS" and the "index.php" file.
- If necessary, give a Read + Write + Execute access to the folders and files, and apply to sub-folders (recursion) : chmod -R 775.
- Edit (if possible) the file *php.ini* :
  ◦ edit *post_max_size* and *upload_max_filesize* to increase the upload file size
  ◦ if *open_basedir* has been modified, verify that the system temp folder was specified
  ◦ restart the web server after *php.ini* modification
- With your browser, go to the home page of your space: complete the installation form and validate : your space is ready for use !