

NewsTrust

Guide for Administrators

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Summary

About this Guide

This guide is for administrators of the NewsTrust.net site and derivative sites using the SocialNews open source platform.

It includes an overview of the NewsTrust and SocialNews platforms, as well as an introduction to their key features, administrative tools, technical capabilities and settings.

You can find more detailed FAQs about our site and tools at newstrust.net/help

If you have any feedback or technical questions not answered by this guide, please email us at feedback@newstrust.net.

For business questions, contact Executive Director Fabrice Florin at fab@newstrust.net.

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About NewsTrust

NewsTrust helps people find good journalism online, so they can make more informed decisions as citizens.

We're nonprofit, nonpartisan, and committed to news literacy and civic engagement. Our social news network features a daily feed of quality news and opinions from mainstream and independent sources, based on ratings from our reviewers. Our web review tools enable the public to evaluate accuracy, fairness, context and other core journalistic principles -- and help people become more discriminating news consumers in the process. We also rate our reviewers based on performance, to increase the reliability of our reviews and help them grow their own news literacy. To find out more, [visit our site](#).

[NewsTrust.net](#) has attracted a growing community of citizens, students, educators and journalists, who share a passion for quality news and information, serving over 1.3 million visitors last year. Our media partners include The Washington Post, USA Today, PBS NewsHour, the Huffington Post and PolitiFact -- and our educational partners include Stanford University, Stony Brook and the University of Nevada, to name but a few.

Besides [NewsTrust.net](#), we are now developing a community fact-checking service called [Truthsquad](#), in partnership with the Center for Public Integrity. Truthsquad engages citizens to fact-check controversial claims from politicians and newsmakers, in collaboration with experienced journalists. We created and tested Truthsquad last year, in collaboration with [FactCheck.org](#), the Poynter Institute and MediaBugs, and with support from the Omidyar Network and MacArthur Foundation (read more below).

This year, we launched our first local news experiment, [NewsTrust Baltimore](#), a social news site to help residents find and share good journalism about their city -- and become more discerning news consumers, especially college and high school students. In just six months, our pilot enabled participants to curate the news together, in collaboration with over 20 local partners, from the Baltimore Sun to WYPR, Towson University and many more.

NewsTrust works with schools across the U.S., to teach news literacy and civic engagement through a variety of [online guides](#), [teacher guides](#) and [educational resources](#) for college and high schools students. These educational services help students learn to separate fact from fiction -- and we provide testing tools to assess their progress and help them grow develop their literacy and critical thinking skills.

NewsTrust's founder and executive director is [Fabrice Florin](#), a former journalist and a digital media pioneer at Apple and Macromedia. Our team includes a select group of award-winning journalists, technologists and community organizers -- with advisors such as Dan Gillmor, Craig Newmark, Howard Rheingold and other media innovators from organizations like Craigslist, Google and Stanford University.

Founded in 2005 and based in Mill Valley, California, NewsTrust is funded through grants and private donations. Our funders include MacArthur Foundation, Omidyar Network, Open Society, Ashoka, Ayrshire Foundation, Mitch Kapor Foundation, Sunlight Foundation and Tides Foundation -- as well as Google and private donors such as Craig Newmark and Doug Carlston.

For more info about NewsTrust, check our [About page](#), our [video overview](#), and our [slides](#).

About SocialNews

NewsTrust has open-sourced its code for its [NewsTrust.net](#) platform, under the name "SocialNews."

This [SocialNews](#) open source code can be downloaded from [Github](#), an open-source sharing site. The code runs on the popular [Ruby on Rails](#) web framework, which is also open source.

The [SocialNews](#) code will enable developers to create their own social news sites, using our platform to help people find good journalism together. We are really happy to make our tools and methodologies available to a broader community.

In summer 2011, we announced a [new direction](#) for NewsTrust on our blog, and this open source project is part of that transition. NewsTrust is now pivoting from a standalone news curation site to a consultancy that will serve the needs of larger partners and help their communities become better informed about important public issues.

We are very grateful to our partners at [Transitions](#) for providing the funding to make this open source project possible. This will enable them to test new applications of our social news platform in Eastern Europe and other world regions.

Developers can [download SocialNews Version 1.0. here](#) and read our [technical documentation here](#).

This open source code is licensed by NewsTrust Communications under the terms of the Berkeley Software Distribution ("[BSD](#)") license. We are moving on to new projects and don't plan to actively develop or support this code base in the short-term, but we will post code updates on Github from time to time, along with corresponding notes on this page.

NewsTrust also offers a range of consulting services to organizations that wish to help their communities become better informed and more engaged about public issues. For example, NewsTrust can provide development services to help your organization adapt this SocialNews code to create your own social news site. To inquire about our partner services, email us at [partners-at-newstrust-dot-net](#).

The NewsTrust and SocialNews projects were a team effort and we are grateful to all our contributors for their work over the past six years. This SocialNews open source code was prepared by [Subramanya Sastry](#), NewsTrust's engineering manager. The NewsTrust code was written by the following developers: Adam Florin, David Fox, Caleb Waldorf, Subramanya Sastry and Mark Daggett.

The following editorial staff members played an important role in developing the various features of this application: Kaizar Campwala, Derek Hawkins, Jon Mitchell, Mary Hartney, Gin Ferrara, Andrew Hazlett. Special thanks to Ezra Fox and the members of the larger NewsTrust community for testing and feedback.

Last but not least, we would like to thank our many funders for helping us develop and improve this software platform over the years. They include the MacArthur Foundation, Omidyar Network, Open Society Foundations, Ashoka, Ayrshire Foundation, Mitch Kapor Foundation, Sunlight Foundation -- as well as private donors such as Craig Newmark and Doug Carlston.

We can't wait to see what new creative uses come out of this open source project. We ourselves benefited greatly from the open source code movement while developing our application and we are happy to return the favor with SocialNews.

NewsTrust Site

For the purposes of this administrative tools guide, we will refer to the NewsTrust.net site to describe the key features of our platform, which are also available in the SocialNews open source platform. We will first give an overview of this site from a consumer perspective, before describing the administrative tools which support that consumer experience.

We know learning a new website can be overwhelming, but NewsTrust is easy to use, once you get the hang of it. Here is an overview of the main features of our site and its tools.

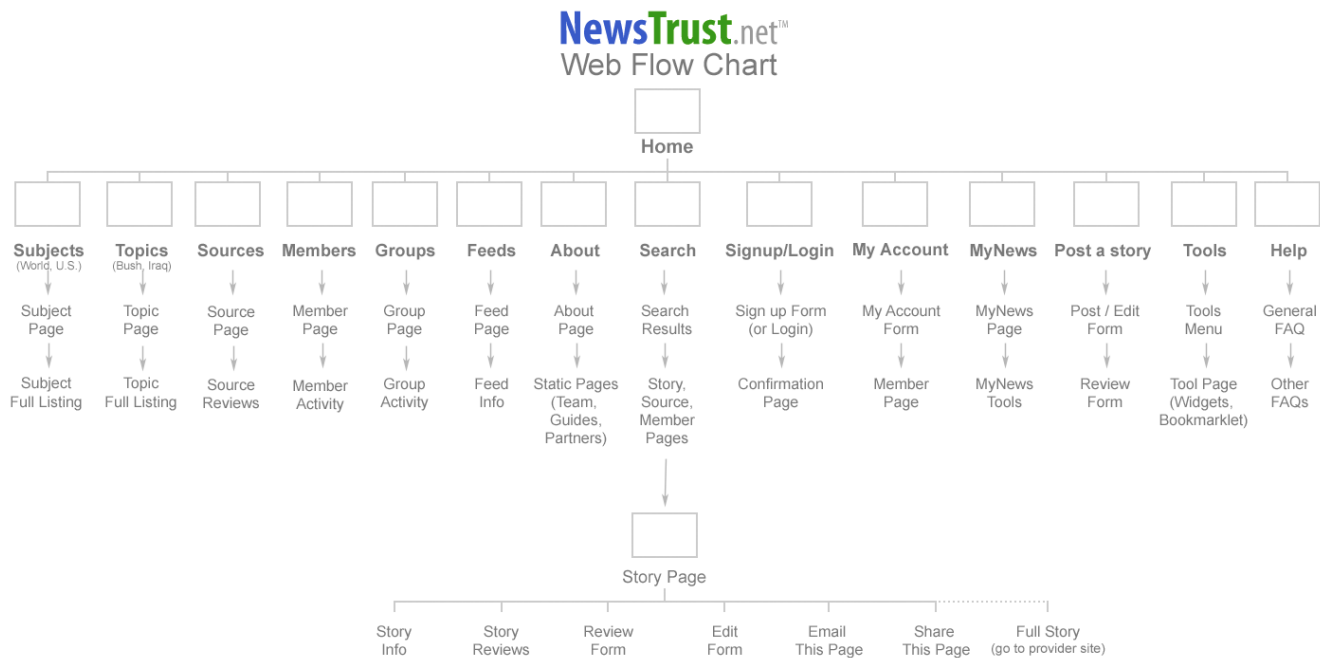
How does NewsTrust work?

[NewsTrust](#) offers a live listing of news stories curated by our community. Our members post and review stories from news sources all around the web. When a story gets added to NewsTrust, it gets its own NewsTrust web address, which displays the story on its original page alongside our review tools. Most stories work with our [toolbar](#), which displays across the top of the page, and the review form drops down on the right side. For some sites, we have to open the review form in a pop-up window, but it works the same way.

Members use these forms to rate news and opinion stories on a range of journalistic criteria, as well as add their own observations and comments. After receiving three reviews, each story gets a NewsTrust rating, which shows readers at a glance how trustworthy the story is, according to our reviewers. NewsTrust ranks stories by rating and date, to provide a curated list of the best (and worst) stories of the day, week or month.

Each story also has its own [story page](#) on NewsTrust, where you can see a brief excerpt, its overall NewsTrust ratings, all the reviews and comments from our members, and links to relevant topics and other related stories.

The site map below gives an overview of the main features of the NewsTrust site. We describe some of these features below. For more detailed help, we invite you to check our FAQs at newstrust.net/help.



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Home page

NewsTrust's [home page](#) is like the front page of your newspaper, only it's changing all the time.

Our editors feature stories and reports in a carousel at the top of the page, usually with a photo and/or a quote. Below the carousel, the Top Stories grid features recent news and opinions from both mainstream and independent media. Top Stories are calculated based on what's happening on the site at the moment, so they're dynamically updated. The Top Stories grid can also display most trusted stories, recent reviews, or editors' picks. Below the "fold," we list recent stories in various subject areas (e.g.: World), as well as opinion pieces and new stories from our "smart feeds." (read more below)

In the right sidebar, our editors feature a variety of configurable boxes, such as 'Our Reviewers' (showing the faces of all the recent reviewers, with links to their member profiles), or recent reviews, featured reviews, share buttons, widgets, etc. Besides these automatically updated boxes, we also manually create and feature boxes for badges and/or links to new activities or reports in that sidebar.

Subjects

Along the top of any NewsTrust page, our navigation bar links you to our various subject pages: [World](#), [Politics](#), [Business](#), or [Sci/Tech](#). Subject pages are like the sections in the newspaper; on each subject page, you'll see the top stories for that subject, as well as some of its related topics.

Topics

Within each subject, we cover a variety of [topics](#). Topics can be broad, such as [Middle East](#) or [Health Care](#), or they can be specific (e.g.: [Obama Administration](#)). Topics also have their own pages, which display top stories and trusted sources, as well as comments. You can see the full list of topics by clicking the ['More'](#) button on the top navigation bar of our site.

Sources

NewsTrust reviews the work of hundreds of news sources (our most trusted sources are listed on our [source page](#)). Each of them has a source profile (see [New York Times](#)), which lists recent stories from that publication, along with that source's overall NewsTrust rating. Source profiles usually include a logo and brief description at the top of the page, with a link back to the source's website. We also list frequent authors and topics we've reviewed for that source, along with other background information (from the source site, Wikipedia or other sites).

We also provide a [source review form](#) where reviewers can rate a source, identify its strengths and weaknesses, as well as allow members to add notes about that source (a bit like restaurant reviews on Yelp). We also offer a ['Rate your sources'](#) page where you can rate all major sources, all in one place.

Members

To participate on NewsTrust, you must be a member. You can meet some of our regular members and recent reviewers on our [members page](#). Click on any member name to see their profile. Every member has a profile page, which displays that member's NewsTrust activity, including the stories they've posted, reviewed or starred, as well as their member level and ratings. If they have filled their profile, it may also include a picture, some biographical information and links to their sites. For more info on how members can sign up, log in, fill their profile and get validated, read below or check our [Member FAQ](#).

Groups

An interesting way for communities to find stories on our site is through [NewsTrust Groups](#). To give NewsTrust partners their own space on our site, we have created dozens of groups for schools, classrooms and other communities of interest. Group pages show the top stories recommended by their hosts and members. For an example of what NewsTrust Groups can do, check out [Border News](#), a student-powered news site on immigration, curated by over 200 college students from five U.S. schools.

Groups are an effective community-building tool, but they require administrators to set them up for our partners. We'll tell you more about what you can do with Groups later in this document.

Feeds

To find good journalism online, NewsTrust follows hundreds of ['smart feeds'](#) from around the web. All day long, we surface interesting news stories from trusted sources, popular news sites and APIs - as well as some of the greatest minds in 'link journalism' on Twitter and other social networks. Together, these *'smart feeds'* harness the collective intelligence of thousands of professionals and citizens -- who extend the NewsTrust community to create a filtered list of quality news and opinion, round the clock.

Visit [Today's Feeds](#) for popular news of the day or check our [Feeds page](#) to see all of our feeds.

About

To complement the 'dynamic content' pages above, we feature a variety of 'static content' pages that are manually created by our editors, as opposed to automatically updated by our software. We usually provide links to these pages on our [About page](#), which points to information about NewsTrust, our social channels, our blog, our guides, our partners, our reports, our slides, our services, our FAQs and many other helpful pages. Many of these pages are also listed in the second row of our navigation bar.

Note that [our blog](#) is hosted on a third-party server (Typepad), which is linked from our main site (it is not functionally integrated with NewsTrust, but we customized the blog with our own site navbar, to make it feel part of the site). Some of these static pages can be directly updated by our editors from their web browser (e.g. [News Hunts page](#)), using our new Pages function. The rest of our static pages can only be updated by a developer.

Search

We provide a simple search tool in our top navbar, which searches all dynamic pages on our site for keywords entered into that small text box. [Search results](#) are displayed on a separate page, with links to pages for stories, sources, members or topics that contain these keywords.

Sign up / Log in

To participate on NewsTrust, you must be a member. Anyone can [sign up](#) to become a member, by clicking on the 'Sign up' link at the top right of each page on our site (if you haven't signed up yet, go to this special [VIP sign up page](#), which will give you more privileges so you can try out some of our features). If you have a Facebook account, the fastest way to sign up or log in is to click on the Facebook 'Log in' button at the top right of each page (you can also sign up with your email address, which requires you to activate your account by clicking on the link in our confirmation email).

Once you are signed up as a member, you will need to log in when you want to participate on the site, by clicking on the [Log in](#) link at the top right of each page. (NewsTrust cookies remember that you are a member, so you don't have to log in every time.) To learn more about sign up or log in, check our [FAQ](#).

My Account

Once you sign up as a member, you will be asked to fill out your member profile, so that other community members can learn more about you. To fill out your own profile, click on [My Account](#) next to your name, at the top right of any page on our site.

As a member adds more information to their profile, gets more active on the site, and receives good ratings from other members, their [member level](#) will increase. As a member's level increases, their reviews carry more weight in a story's NewsTrust rating.

When members first sign up on NewsTrust, they start with a validation level of 1, which means they can review stories, but they can't post stories to NewsTrust, to prevent spam. When a member with a validation of 1 tries to post a story, they are asked to review two stories, then email the editors to request validation. Our editors will then check that member's reviews and profile, to make sure they do not contain spam or offensive comments -- and verify that they are using a real name, a valid email address and valid links, as well as generally complying with our [terms of service](#).

Once a member has received a validation level of 2, they can start posting stories and comments on NewsTrust. When a member reaches a member level of 3, they become a [trusted member](#), a sign that they have earned our trust by participating thoughtfully. Trusted members are featured more prominently on our site, they can rate other members' reviews, and they can also edit a story's information, such as its source, the type of story, or its topics.

Note that administrators can also create special invitation pages for our partners, so their communities can receive a higher validation automatically when they sign up. Invitations can also be linked to groups, so if a partner wants to use a NewsTrust Group, they can have all their readers sign up through a special invitation page, and they will be automatically validated and added to their group.

Post a Story

One of the benefits of being a member is that you get access to special tools, such as ['Post a story'](#). Members with a validation of 2 or greater can post new stories to NewsTrust by clicking the yellow 'Post a Story' button in the right side of the navbar, which brings up a text box. If you copy the web address of any news story and paste it into the box, the story will be added to NewsTrust, and you'll be taken to the story edit form, where you will fill in the information to organize the story. To learn more about posting on NewsTrust, check our [Reviewer FAQ](#).

My News

Another members-only tool is [MyNews](#), a personal news filter that gathers news you care about, all in one place. This easy-to-use web application lets you follow topics, sources and people that interest you, including recommendations from your friends on Facebook and Twitter. Your personal MyNews page is updated 24/7 with news that matches your interests. You can easily personalize that page with a full set of filtering tools — and even get MyNews delivered to you as a daily email, RSS feed or widget. Read more about this feature [here](#), or check our [MyNews FAQ](#).

Other Tools

NewsTrust offers a wide range of other tools to help you find and share good journalism. Read more below and on our [tools page](#).

Bookmarklet

Our [bookmarklet](#) is a link you can add to your browser's bookmarks toolbar. It makes it very easy to post and review a story on NewsTrust, from any web page. Wherever you are on the web, click our bookmarklet on your browser's toolbar to bring up our "Post a Story" form, with the story's title and URL already filled in. Get your own bookmarklet [here](#).

Emails

NewsTrust offers [email news feeds](#), which are free to all registered members. Our email feeds are available in HTML or plain text format, and can be sent out daily or weekly (this requires some curation before each email goes out). The emails feature updated selections of news and opinions from our site, including these two sections: Most Recent and Most Trusted. Manage your [email settings](#) here.

RSS

To get NewsTrust's own feeds of top stories, check our [RSS Feeds](#), which are updated hourly for hundreds of news topics.

Widgets

NewsTrust can be exported to other sites by using our [widgets](#) -- which display our top rated stories for different topics or sources -- or recommendations from our members or groups. In just a few clicks, you can customize our widgets, then place them on any web page under your control. You can even create a widget of your own story reviews for your personal website or blog. Just go to [our widget menu](#), select the content and size of your widget, then copy and paste the code onto your page.

Using NewsTrust

Here is a brief overview on how to find, review and share stories on NewsTrust. For more in-depth, technical instructions, check our [General FAQ](#), [Member FAQ](#), or [Reviewer FAQ](#).

Finding stories

There are many ways to find interesting stories on NewsTrust. You can start by browsing our home page, as well as subject or topic pages, which let you drill down and find stories on a particular theme. You can also use the Search tool -- or your own MyNews page, once you have set it up. Our email newsletters, RSS feeds and widgets also offer useful digests of recommended stories.

Reading stories

To read a story, simply click on its title. This takes you to its website, and the story will either appear under the [NewsTrust toolbar](#), or in a separate pop-up window (for sites that do not support our toolbar or HTML frames). To read NewsTrust reviews for any story, click on the 'Reviews' button (or on the story's "trust-o-meter", a small bar graph which shows its story rating on a 1-5 scale).

Reviewing stories

All stories on NewsTrust have a yellow 'Review' button next to them. Clicking on this button will open the story and its [review form](#), either in the toolbar or as a pop-up window.

We offer two kinds of review form, each of which is available in different lengths, as shown on our [Quick Review Guide](#). The default review form lets you rate stories by answering questions about their facts, fairness or sourcing. Each question can be rated on a scale from 1 to 5 in these rating forms. We also offer a simpler "button form" with binary buttons for each question (e.g.: Factual or Not Factual).

Both the rating form and the button form ask the same questions, and they're offered in four lengths: Short (3 questions), Quick (5 questions), Full (10 questions), and Advanced (18 questions). Each version offers you the option to "Expand your review" by adding comments, quotes and links to other stories.

To select your preferred version of the review form, click on the drop-down menu on the top right of any form. When you save your review, the form will remember your preference for your next review. To learn more about reviewing on NewsTrust, be sure to check our [Quick Review](#) guide and [Reviewer FAQ](#).

Sharing stories

All stories on NewsTrust can be shared on Facebook, Twitter, or other social networks, as well as by email. To share a story, click on the appropriate sharing icon next to its review button. Clicking on this icon will open a small panel that will let you add a comment (or email address) before sharing that story. You can also click 'Like' on most pages on NewsTrust to add them to your Facebook news stream.

Posting stories

As described above, members with a validation of 2 or greater can [post stories](#) for review on NewsTrust by clicking the yellow 'Post a Story' button in the right side of the navbar. Read more in our [FAQ](#).

Stars

If you find a story you like or want to read later, simply click on the 'star' icon next to its title. Starred stories will show up on your [member profile](#) and in any groups of which you are a member.

Comments

Members with a level of 2 or more can add comments on many areas of the site, including at the bottom of all story pages, most subject, topic, and group pages, as well as on individual reviews. These comments are moderated by the editors, as well as by topic or group hosts.

Administrative Tools for Hosts

Hosts

Trusted members who review regularly and effectively can be invited by our editors to become [hosts](#), or community leaders with special privileges. They can host a topic, a source, a group or special activities like news hunts or truthsquads, as well as edit story info or rate reviews. For example, a topic host can edit their assigned topic page (e.g.: [Health care](#)), feature stories of their choice on that page, or moderate its comments section. When we partner with schools, we invite teachers to host groups for their classes, which gives them more control over their group pages. To learn more about hosting on NewsTrust, check our [Host FAQ](#).

Rating reviews

Hosts and trusted members (with member levels of 3 or greater) can rate other member's reviews on a scale from 1 to 5. These ratings from other members are an important part of an overall member level. To rate a review, click on the bullets next to 'Rate this review' on any story page, using this 1 to 5 scale:

- 1 - This review is superficial, biased or irrelevant.
- 2 - This review shows some bias or misunderstanding of the story.
- 3 - This review does not seem biased, but may be incomplete.
- 4 - This is a good review, which follows NewsTrust's guidelines.
- 5 - This is an outstanding, thorough and informative review, which other reviewers should read.

Editing story info

If you are a host, you can edit the information we collect for each story. This can be done by clicking on the pencil icon next to the share tools in any story page (that pencil icon is also available on the home page and most pages that include story listings).

This takes you to a page called "Edit Story Info." There, you can update or change its [story info](#). Before a story can be listed on our home page or topic pages, this info needs to be filled in correctly, including: a story title or headline, a source name, a brief quote, the name(s) of the author(s), and a story type. The basic story types are "News" "Opinion," and "Other" (advanced users can select more detailed story types, such as "Research," "Interview" or "Editorial"). We also encourage you to add as many related [topics](#) as you think apply to the story, so that it gets listed on all the relevant topic pages. To learn more about editing story info, read our [Host FAQ](#).

Adding a photo to a story

To add a photo to a story, click on the pencil icon for that story, to go to its edit page. Then click on the "Multimedia" tab. From there, you can browse for an image and upload it from your computer. Be sure to fill out the "Credit" field with the name of the source that owns the rights to the photo, and add a link to the original page where you found that photo in the "Credit URL" field. When you're done, scroll down to the bottom of the page and click the yellow 'Save' button. This photo will now appear in the story page, as well as in any featured story box that includes that story on the home page, or a topic or group page.

Editing source profiles

If you are the host for a source, you can [edit its source profile](#) by clicking on the pencil icon next to the share tools for that source (that pencil icon is only shown if you are the host of that page, or staff). Then follow the instructions on the edit form. If you're not sure how to edit a source profile, check this example of a fully edited profile for the [New York Times](#). You can then edit that source page, which lets you change the source name, web address, domain, media type, ownership, editorial priority, online access and description in the main tab, as well as other editorial settings such as status, logo, comments and framebuster site (which controls whether that source's stories will be shown under our toolbar or in a pop-up window). Edit carefully, as any changes you make will be featured prominently in that source page. When you are done, click "Save." To learn more about editing source profiles, read our [Host FAQ](#).

Editing topic pages

If you are a topic host, you can edit your topic page (e.g.: [Health care](#)) by clicking on the pencil icon next to the share tools for that topic (that pencil icon is only shown if you are the host of that page, or staff). Then follow the instructions on the edit form. For more detailed instructions on editing features a group page, read the home page sub-section of the Admin Tools section below. You can edit the topic page layout, and display stories of your choice in the featured story box or the story grid -- as well as select what boxes to show in the right sidebar (photo, top sources, topic widget or other topics for that subject).

To fill a 'featured story' box (or some options in the 'story grid'), you will first need the 'story ID' for the stories you want to feature. To get this 'story ID', start by finding the story anywhere on NewsTrust and clicking the blue "Reviews" button. This will take you to the NewsTrust story page, which will have a URL that looks like "http://newstrust.net/stories/xxxxxxx," or "http://newstrust.net/stories/xxxxxxx?=zyzyzyz," where the x's are numbers. These numbers are the story ID you are looking for (ignore the "?" or anything after the numbers). Just copy and paste them in the appropriate story ID box.

You can also edit the topic page itself, which lets you change the topic name, slug and intro, as well as other settings such as comments, status, number of stories, image and subjects this topic belongs to.

When editing most page descriptions on NewsTrust, you can add links, rich text format and special graphics by using HTML code, or a simpler scripting language called Textile, or both. See code samples below for examples of features that can be added to descriptions or sidebar blocks. Edit carefully, as any changes you make will be featured prominently in that topic page. When you are done, click "Update."

Editing group pages

If you would like to host a [group page](#) for your community, you will need to contact our editors so they can set one up for you, as well as give you host privileges. Once your group page has been created and you have been added as its host, you'll have a range of options for how to organize and manage it. To see what a group page looks like, check out [Border News](#), a student-powered news site on immigration.

A group page can display automated story listings from the members of your group, or it can be manually curated, with featured stories, photos, or other resources of your choice. The story listings on your group page shows only stories posted or reviewed by members of your group. These stories will display blue group ratings (instead of the green "trust-o-meter" ratings shown elsewhere around the site). These group ratings are only based on ratings from members of your group.

To [edit your group page](#), click on the 'Edit Page' button with a pencil icon, below your group's description (that button is only shown if you are the host of that page, or staff). Then follow the instructions on the edit form. For more detailed instructions on editing features a group page, read the home page sub-section of the Admin Tools section below.

You can edit the group description, subtitle or web address in the Group Info section. You can also decide how private you want your group page to be in the Access menu: it can be totally visible to the public, restricted to NewsTrust members, or made private for group members only. Membership can be by invitation-only, or open to all (which will display a 'Join this group' button on your page). You can also manually add members to your group on that edit page.

You can also edit the group page layout, and display stories of your choice in the featured story box or the story grid -- as well as select what boxes to show in the right sidebar (photo, top sources, group widget or other group for that subject). You can also control which tabs to show in your group page; for example, you can choose to display your group's most trusted or least trusted stories first, or you can have it display recent activity by your members. If you like, you can constrain all listings to only show stories on particular topics.

Edit carefully, as any changes you make will be featured prominently in that group page. When you are done, click "Update." To learn more about hosting a group, check our [Group Hosts FAQ](#).

Administrative Tools for Staff

If you are an editor, staff or administrator of the NewsTrust site, you can access our tools by clicking on 'Admin' in the second row of the top navbar (it's the last gray link after Help, all the way to the right). You need to be logged in to see this option. This will display the Admin Toolbar below.

NewsTrust[®] National

Admin Tools [Go to Baltimore Admin Tools](#)



Hello, [Fabrice Florin](#) | [Log Out](#) | [Not You?](#)

[Home](#) | [Comments](#) | [Emails](#) | [Feeds](#) | [Groups](#) | [Local Sites](#) | [Members](#) | [Newsletter](#) | [Pages](#) | [Partners](#) | [Quotes](#) | [Stories](#) | [Sources](#) | [Subjects](#) | [Topics](#) | [Tags](#)

We will describe each of these tools one-by-one.

Home Page Tool

This tool lets you [edit the home page](#) and is shown by default when you click on 'Admin' from the main site.

It includes the following sections:

- Carousel
- Staging Area
- Story Grid
- News Comparison
- Code Blocks
- Sidebar Boxes

Carousel

The carousel form lets you control which items are displayed in the top section of the home page, which works a little bit like a slide-show to feature the most important stories, reports or fact-checks of the day. You can display a total of six slides in that section, labeled A to F.

Each slide can contain a report, a story, a fact-check or your own HTML code. If you select 'Report', you will be prompted to fill in a label, a title, link, byline, blurb, photo URL and caption. If you select 'Story,' you will be prompted to fill in a label, a story ID and a topic (to fill the story ID, refer to the topic page editing instructions above). If you select 'Fact-check,' you will be prompted to fill in a label, a quote ID and a blurb, and will have the option to show 'True or False' buttons (note this option is not available in the open source SocialNews platform).

Each slide also includes a 'Rank' drop-down menu that lets you specify the order in which to display that slide in the carousel. Also included for each slide is an optional 'Call to action', which lets you add a line of promotional text below the photo. Note that photos are required for all carousel items, and appear to the left of the text blocks in each slide. If you want to feature a story, make sure to add a photo on that story page -- or add a photo to its featured topic page, as described in the previous section.

Staging Area

The staging area is only shown if the carousel is empty. It can only feature stories, and prompts you to fill in a topic, a label, a story ID and optional features like a call to action, featured reviews or promotional blocks. To feature a review, pull its review ID from the URL of its full review page (it's the last number in that URL, after the story ID). To feature a block, read the code block section below.

Story Grid

The story grid form lets you control which items are displayed in the 'Top Stories' section of the home page, which is a 3 x 2 matrix of recommended stories. You can display a total of six stories in that section, labeled 1 to 6. By default, the first row of three stories is set to show recent news stories, and the second row shows recent opinions, but you can easily edit its settings.

Each box in that grid can be set to show stories from different types of listings, or reviews from specified members or topic names. Listing types include: most recent stories, most trusted, least trusted (worst), recent reviews (all members), trusted reviews (from members we trust) and picks (starred items). Grid boxes can also be constrained to show only news stories (or only opinions), from only mainstream sources (or independents).

You can also enter a member or topic slug to only show stories reviewed by that member or matching that topic. For all options above, stories are automatically updated to feature whichever story is most recent, most or least trusted, as set by the editor. Last but not least, you can manually specify a single story for display in any box, simply by filling in the 'Story' box with a valid story (to fill the story ID, refer to the topic page editing instructions above).

News Comparison

The news comparison form is an optional feature. It enables you to list stories in a special 'news comparison' sidebar on the home page, then invite your community to review them. The purpose of this news literacy tool is to show how diverse sources cover the same story in different ways.

First fill in the heading, subtopic and description for your news comparison. You can then display a total of three stories in that section. To feature specific stories, simply enter their story ID in their 'Story' box (to fill the story ID, refer to the topic page editing instructions above).

If you prefer, you can automatically feature new stories on a given topic, so that news comparison is always fresh. To enable that feature, click on the checkbox called 'Use topic listing?', and it will only show stories about the topic selected in the staging area of this home edit page. You also have the option to link stories to each other, add a link to compare more stories.

This news comparison will appear in the right sidebar of the home page, after you click on the checkbox called 'Show news comparison.' The first time you do this, you will have to add the news comparison to the sidebar box as described in the next section.

Code blocks

The home page sidebar can be customized by editors to feature a wide range of content boxes, like the news comparison above. To help editors quickly update the sidebar with the contents of their choice, we developed a system based on 'code blocks' that are displayed in 'sidebar boxes.' A code block includes all the instructions for what should appear inside a box, and is usually written in HTML. In the next section, we will discuss how to add a 'code block' into a specific 'sidebar box.'

Code blocks can support a wide range of contents, from news comparisons to featured reviews, recent reviews or reviewers, even interactive quizzes. To get started quickly, we recommend starting with some of the 'prebaked code blocks' that are available for use in the code blocks section. They include modules for featured reviews (showing the most recent review from a trusted member that includes notes), recent reviewers (showing thumbnail photos of the most recent reviewers) or recent reviews (showing the three most recently reviewed stories). These prebaked blocks are really easy to install, but you cannot edit their code through the admin tools.

To create your own code block, click on 'Create new code block.' This will open a new form that lets you give a slug and a body to your code block, in HTML code. Check out three examples of code blocks at the end of this document.

Sidebar Boxes

To add a 'code block' into a specific 'sidebar box' on your home page, follow these instructions.

First, click on 'Create new right sidebar box' in the [sidebar box section](#) of the home admin tool. You will be asked to give it a name of your choice (e.g. *About us*, *Featured Badge* or *Share This Page*). Then

specify the position you would like this box to have in your sidebar, by entering a number (e.g.: 0, 1, 2, etc.) -- and click the checkbox if you want to display a header with the name of that box. Next, specify a slug for the code block you would like to feature in that box (e.g. *about_baltimore*, *badge_signup_guide* or *share_this_page*). For your convenience, slugs for all known code blocks are listed on that page, and you can simply click on a slug to add it to that box. Some code blocks like 'featured review' even allow you to specify a parameter (to feature a specific review for the next 12 hours, enter its review ID in the parameter box). Click 'Create' to save your settings for this sidebar box.

The next step is to connect your code block to your chosen sidebar box. In the code block section of the admin tools page, click on the 'Edit' link for the block you want to connect. Then select the sidebar box you want this block to appear in, by clicking on the drop-down menu next to 'editorial space' at the bottom of that page, where all known sidebar boxes are listed. Click 'Update' when you are done.

Note that you can easily edit your sidebar boxes by clicking on their 'edit' button, where you can change the settings, like giving them a different name, position or code block slug.

When you are done customizing your home page, click the green 'Update' buttons in the admin tool to return to your home page, where you can see your changes. Note that it can take up to a minute for your changes to appear on the home page, as we cache some of its sections in order to increase display speed.

Comments Tool

Click on 'Comments' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. It lets you review comments that have been flagged because of possibly offensive language. Review these comments, and if necessary, hide them or remove their flags. Deleted comments are listed on the front page for this tool.

Emails Tool

Click on 'Emails' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. It lets you send bulk emails to members of your community. You can either send an email without a template, use an existing template, or create a new template.

To send an email that you don't want to save, click on 'Send email (without a template)'. This will take you to the 'Send Bulk Email' form, where you are prompted to specify a template name, whether you want to send re-invites to guests, send HTML emails or ignore 'special notices' setting (for urgent messages only). If you are sending invitations for people to register as member, you can specify an invitation code, which will be displayed in their member profile once they sign up (this lets you track members by invitation code and send targeted messages to all users who share that code - e.g.: we use BALT for Baltimore members, or HUFF for Huffington Post members, etc.). You can also specify a 'From' email address (e.g. 'NewsTrust Community Manager <community@newstrust.net>'), a 'To' list of email addresses or member names (e.g.: Fabrice Florin, with each name or address on a separate line), a subject and an email body. If HTML is selected, you need to include an HTML version of your message, separately from the plain text version (depending on the email application of your recipients, either the plain text or HTML message will be displayed).

Press 'Send Mail' when you are ready to send your bulk email. We highly recommend sending test emails to staff members before sending to a large group, to avoid sending messages with errors (we typically do several tests on major emails, to make sure that the links all work as intended, etc.).

If you have already created an email template, you can use it to send batch emails by clicking 'Initialize mail using this template'. This fills the Send Bulk Email tools with all the settings from that template. Click 'Create New Template' to make your own template, then click 'Create' to save it (it will be listed which will be listed under 'Existing Templates').

Feeds Tool

Click on 'Feeds' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. It lets you add or edit feeds from a wide range of sources, by following their RSS feeds or twitter streams (here's an [example](#) of a feed we follow, with a full listing [here](#)). This makes it a lot easier to fill up your site with interesting stories, by automatically listing them as pending or queued stories, and pre-filling story info from their feeds. We created feeds to power our MyNews service, to insure that a wide variety of stories would be available to match the interests of our members (we now track thousands of stories per day on NewsTrust, from hundreds of different feeds).

To create a feed, click on 'Add New Feed' to open our edit form for feeds. Then specify if you want that feed to be 'auto-fetched' (this will automatically fetch that feed to add any new items to our story database around the clock - right now, we auto-fetch feeds every hour or so on the NewsTrust site).

Next, specify a Feed URL (e.g.: a machine-readable RSS feed URL, like this one from [Google News](#)), and/or add a home page URL (typically the corresponding consumer-facing page, [like this one](#)). You can then fill in optional fields such as a feed name, a subtitle, a description, a feed type (e.g.: RSS), a feed group (e.g.: Publication), a member ID (if this is a feed from an existing member), a source ID (if this is a feed from an existing source), default topics (if this feed only contains stories from an existing topic, e.g.: Europe), default story type (if this feed only contains stories from an specific type, e.g.: Opinion) and a field level (to specify the relative importance of that feed, compared to others).

Groups Tool

Click on 'Groups' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. It lets you add or edit [group pages](#), which come in three categories: Social Groups (for external partners), Roles and Other Internal Groups (both for in-house use).

Social Groups are usually created for our partners or special communities of interest ([see examples](#)). The most widespread use of these groups so far has been by educational partners, who have requested group pages for entire schools or departments, as well as individual classrooms or even workgroups. We have also created group pages for media partners, but they do not get used very often. This feature could also be used to support other types of affinity groups (e.g.: journalists, teachers, environmentalists, republicans, democrats, etc.), but have not yet created any such groups on NewsTrust.

Roles are in-house groups that give their members special privileges throughout our site -- as well as gray role labels shown next to their names on their member profiles. They include:

- Admin: gives wide access to administrative tools and some web services
- Betatest: gives beta testers access to special features under development
- Editor: gives access to most editorial tools (home, story, source, topic or group pages)
- Host: gives access to some editorial tools (story pages, and the source, topic or group pages they host)
- Newshound: limited access to some editorial tools (story pages), usually for power users
- Staff: gives wide access to most administrative tools and all editorial tools
- Sysop: similar to Admin (may no longer be used)

Other Internal Groups are in-house groups that provide no special features, except that members of these groups get special labels displayed next to their names on their member profiles. They include: Advisors, Directors, Donors, Founding Members, Partners and VIPs.

Only members with Admin, Staff or Editor roles can create a group page using this Admin Groups tool. To create a group, click on 'Create New Group' to open our edit form for groups. To start a social group with pre-filled features for educational partners, click on 'Create New Social Group (from template)'. First, specify a name, slug and description for your group, as well as a group type and protection options. This will create your group and take you to the Group edit page, where you can configure your group further, as outlined in the Advanced Tasks section above. Note that the group page tool is also very similar to the home page tool described earlier in this section.

Here is how to fill up the 'Group Info' section of the group administrative tool, which is on the top left of the group edit page, and is only accessible by members of Staff or Admin groups. First enter a group name, a slug, a short name, an email address, group status, category, pre-activation for group stories and comment description. You also have the option to activate a group, allow comments and connect it to a partner invitation page (see Partners section below for more on this feature). Note that a dummy user account is automatically created for each group, in order to use the MyNews functions (which are used to display stories the group might be interested in the New Stories section).

If this group page is for a media partner, we recommend adding a link to their source page in the group description, as well as a "sign up" link to their partner invitation page, if any. Similarly, if you are using a signup badge in the sidebar of a partner group page (see Javascript code block example at the end of this document), make sure that it links to the partner invitation page, if any.

When you are done customizing your group page, click the green 'Update' button to see your page.

Local Sites

The Local Sites tool lets you create and manage local versions of our national site, much like the [NewsTrust Baltimore site](#) we created for a special pilot in spring 2011. This function requires a lot of special engineering and editorial management tasks, which are too complex to describe in this document. Please [email us](#) if you wish to hire us to help create local sites for your project.

Members Tools

Click on 'Members' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. Most community management functions are done by editing member accounts. These member accounts are not directly available in this section of the Admin Tools, but will be described next, as they relate to our community management tasks.

Terminate Spammers

The only tool in this section lets you terminate spammers or problem members who violate your site's [terms of service](#). At NewsTrust, we have had to terminate over 17% of all members who registered in recent years, because they turned out to be "spammers" - people who only sign up on NewsTrust in order to add promotional spam to our site (usually URLs to commercial sites). We have a strict no-spam policy on our site, and regularly terminate the accounts of these spammers.

To terminate spammers in bulk, click on 'Terminate Spammers', then enter the member IDs of the spammers you wish to terminate (separate each member ID with a comma). To get a member's ID, go to their profile and click on 'More Info', where their member ID is shown to authorized users in the Admin Info. This will change their member status from 'Member' to 'Terminated', and automatically prevent them from posting any more reviews or comments or stories, as well as hiding all of their posts and profiles.

Another great way to terminate spammers is through the 'Site Activity Log' email that is sent every four hours to site administrators (using this group email: posts@newstrust.net). That email lists all the members who have recently signed up, as well as the stories that were recently posted and reviewed, along with all individual reviews. This email lets administrators monitor the site even when they are away from their computers, and includes links to any story posted or reviewed by a new member, along with a special link to terminate them. If you think this person is a spammer, click on that link to access the Terminate Spammers tool, which will be pre-filled with their member ID. Also note that you can terminate a member individually by going to their profile and editing their account, as described below.

Community Management / Member Validation

Our primary community management tools are accessed through individual member accounts. Admin and Staff members can access any member account by clicking on their name, going to their profile and clicking on the pencil icon next to the share tool to edit their account, as described below. (To see your own account, click on [My Account](#) next to your name, at the top right of any page on our site.)

As you look at any member account, you will see six tabs, which allow a member to share more information about themselves. They include:

- Account - where most of the important member information is located
- Profile - where the information shown in a member profile is stored
- Emails - where a member can specify which emails it wishes to receive
- Background - optional demographic information about a member
- Picture - where a member can upload a photo or image avatar
- Contact Info - where a member's optional contact info is stored

Administrators and staff use the Account tab to manage a member's account, in a special section called 'Account Management' (which is only visible to administrators, and has a light blue shade to separate it from the parts of the page that the member can see). That section includes these two important fields:

- Member Status - where you can change a member's status from Guest to Member or Terminated
- Validation Rating - where you can change a member's validation from Pass (1) to Outstanding (5)

We have already described above how the member status can be changed to terminate a member. But this status drop-down menu can also be used to upgrade a guest to member status (for members who did not activate their account -- this is usually done by clicking on a special link in the email confirmation that is sent to them after they sign up). It also can be used to temporarily suspend a member without removing all their privileges -- or to identify duplicate accounts used by the same member.

As described above, one of the unique features of NewsTrust is that we use [member levels](#) to incrementally give members more privileges as they earn our trust. Half of a member level is determined by their validation level, which is given to them by our staff, based on the quality of their participation. Most members automatically receive a validation level of 1 when they first sign up on NewsTrust; this enables them to review stories, but they can't post stories to NewsTrust, to prevent spam. (Note that some members get a validation level of 2 when they sign up through special partner pages.)

Once a new member becomes active as a reviewer on our site, our editors will then check that member's reviews and profile, to verify that they are using a real name, a valid email address and valid links, as well as generally comply with our [terms of service](#). We look at their activity to see if their posts include spam, offensive comments, excessive self-promotion or partisan gaming. If we find any evidence that they are breaching our terms of service, but that breach appears to be unintentional, we usually send them an email to request that they make the necessary adjustments, before we can increase their member validation and give them more privileges. If the breach is clearly intentional, as is the case with most spammers, we do not send them an email and terminate them immediately. This requires editors to exercise great care in making these judgment calls, to insure that we don't unfairly terminate the wrong members. When in doubt, we sometimes do a Google search on a member's name, email or web links, to check their online reputation before taking a radical action.

Once you have validated a member's activity and determined that they have posted valid information and are not breaching our terms of service, we recommend that you raise their validation level to 2, so they can start posting stories and comments on NewsTrust. To do that, simply click on their validation drop-down menu and select 'Fair (2)'. In cases when the quality of their reviews is good, with thoughtful notes and comments, you can raise their validation level directly to 'Good (3)'. In many cases, this will also give them a member level of 3, if they have filled up their profile background and received good ratings for their reviews -- which gives them [trusted member](#) status. Trusted members are identified by a special badge on their profile, and can rate other members' reviews, as well as edit a story's information, and their reviews are also featured more prominently on our home page and story pages.

We recommend validating all your members soon after they sign up, and emailing them right away to let them know their validation and member level, with feedback on how they can increase their level and gain more influence and recognition on the site. This can really improve the quality of their participation.

Newsletter Tool

NewsTrust offers to registered members a variety of email newsletters:

- Daily newsletter - a selection of the day's most recent and most trusted stories
- Weekly newsletter - a selection of the week's most recent and most trusted stories
- MyNews daily email - a personal selection from your MyNews page

Members can subscribe to any of these newsletters in their account or on the [email page](#). To subscribe to any of our newsletters, simply check its box above and click "Save". To unsubscribe, uncheck its box and click "Save". You can also check whether you would like your emails sent in plain text or HTML formats. MyNews daily emails are only sent to members who set up their MyNews page and subscribe to this email service.

Only editors, staff or administrators can edit contents of the first two newsletters above (the MyNews email is based on your personal interests). Click on "Newsletter" in the Admin Toolbar to use the newsletter tool. It lets you edit the subject line, header and footer of email newsletters before they are sent to members of your community. You can also preview the newsletter, refresh stories and send test emails on a separate preview page.

To edit a newsletter from the administrative tool, click on 'Set up'. This will take you to the 'Newsletter Settings' form, where you are prompted to specify a subject line of this newsletter (click on the checkbox if you would like to add the top story title at the end of that subject line). You can also edit the header and the footer of the email message. The middle part of the email is automatically generated and lists the ten most recent stories, followed by the ten most trusted stories, broken down between news and opinion, as well as mainstream and independent sources.

The header section can be of any length and is a great way to promote community events and special announcements, with links to stories or pages you want your members to view. The footer section can be used for tips on how to use the site and support this project, as well as required information about this email and how to change your email settings, or instantly unsubscribe to an email. The editorial copy for the header is likely to change often, while the same footer can generally be used all year long.

You will need to write two versions of your newsletters, one in plain text and the other in HTML format (subscribers will receive either the plain text or HTML version, based on their preferences; if they have not set their preferences, HTML versions are sent by default.)

Email Newsletter Samples are included at the end of this document, with the headers and footers for the weekly email we send out every Wednesday to NewsTrust members. Samples include both HTML and plain text messages. We recommend you start with these versions for testing purposes, then modify them as you see fit.

Note that this tool supports special code for key functions such as inserting the member's first name in the body of the message (add [MEMBER.FIRST_NAME] anywhere to display their first name). A required function that should remain in all footers is the ability to instantly unsubscribe from this email (add [UNSUBSCRIBE_URL] anywhere to display a link that will unsubscribe them automatically).

To save your edits, press 'Update Newsletter' when you are ready. This takes you to a preview page where you can check both text and HTML versions of the newsletter on a single page. From that preview page, you can also refresh stories if you want to get the latest story listings. These story listings will not be updated until you click refresh again, unless it's been a while since you last refreshed.

You can also send test emails from the preview page. We highly recommend sending test emails to staff members before sending to a large group, to avoid sending newsletters with errors (we typically do several tests on weekly newsletters, to make sure that the links all work as intended, etc.). Once the newsletter goes out at its appointed time, it is not possible to edit it until all emails have been sent.

We recommend sending all newsletters on a regular date and time of day, so that people know when to expect them. This means that editors should plan to make their edits at least a couple hours before that appointed time, to write their promotional copy in the header, change the subject line, refresh the stories, make sure that the stories have been properly posted and tagged and send test emails to verify that all links work.

Note that a separate email server is needed to process all messages generated through this tool, the bulk email tool and by the system itself, which sends a variety of important email notices based on your network activity. Your developers will need to set up that external email service before you can launch, as email notices are an absolute requirement for members to sign up. Many Internet service providers can offer these email services for your site (NewsTrust uses SendGrid for all its email needs).

Pages Tool

Click on 'Pages' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. It was created to help editors quickly edit special pages that need frequent edits, such as [product pages](#), ['about' pages](#) and FAQs. Prior experience with HTML is required to edit these pages. Your developers will need to create these pages for you, then let you edit them as needed. Contact us if you would like more info about this feature.

Partners Tool

Click on 'Partners' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. It lets you add, edit or delete [partner pages](#), which are special landing pages welcoming new visitors sent to our site by our partners. These partner pages invite new visitors to sign up as members and are typically centered around special activities such as news hunts, as well as co-branded with the partner's logo, as shown on [this page for USA Today](#). These partner invitation pages allows us to track the number of visitors who sign up as members as a result of our partner promotion. Signing up on a partner page adds a special invitation code in each new member's account, and can also give them a higher validation level so they can start posting new stories or comments right away.

Only members with Admin, Staff or Editor roles can create a partner page using this Admin Groups tool. To create a page, click on 'Create New Partner.' First, enter a short name and description for your partner, and then click 'Create.' This will create your partner page and take you to the Partner edit page, where you can create an invitation for a particular partner activity or project (in the USA Today example, the activity was an Immigration News Hunt).

Here is how to edit an invitation partner page with this administrative tool. First enter an invitation name and an invitation code (e.g.: USATODAY-IMMIGRATION), which will be used to track all members tagged with that code. If you have set up a group page for this partner, enter a group name to connect it with their partner page. You also have the option to specify a higher validation level to be given to all new members who sign up on this partner page. This tool also lets you specify special text to include in activation emails sent to these members, as well as create special co-branded widgets promoting the partnership, with stories on the topic or theme of your collaboration.

Note that administrators can also create special group pages for our partners, which can be linked to from a partner page. So if a partner wants to use a group page, they can have all their readers sign up through a special invitation page, and they will be automatically validated and added to their group.

When you are done customizing your invitation page, click the green 'Update' button to save it. Before you send it to your partners, be sure to test that this invitation page works as intended by signing up a new member through that page -- and checking that their invitation code was properly added in the More Info section of their profile.

Quotes Tool

Click on 'Quotes' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. This tool was created for [Truthsquad](#), our fact-checking pilot, which invites participants to fact-check the news with professional oversight from our editors. This service was not included in our open source Social News release, since it is still in prototype stage.

Stories Tool

Click on 'Stories' in the Admin Toolbar to access this story area, which includes two special tools.

Merge duplicate stories

The first tool in this section lets you merge duplicate stories (this is particularly useful when the same story is posted by different members, with a slightly different URL or distribution outlet).

Click on 'Merge duplicate stories', then enter the story IDs of the two stories you wish to merge, specifying which story to keep, and which story to hide. To get a story ID, go to its story page, and copy the first number you see in its URL, as described above, then copy and paste that number in the appropriate story ID box.

Then click on 'Merge.' This will move all of the contents of the hidden story into the kept story: story info, reviews and comments (except posts that are by the same member) get added to the story page you chose to keep. This process cannot be undone, so make sure you have the right story IDs.

Mass edit queued stories (last 24 hours)

Another powerful tool in this section lets editors, staff or administrators browse through all the most recent stories fetched from the feeds that have been created so far, then quickly post and review a number of these stories from a single form. It's a useful productivity tool for when you have limited time to update the site, and want to post new stories as fast as possible.

Click on 'Mass edit queued stories (last 24 hours)', and then click on 'List' for the stories you want to post. This will change their status from 'pending' to 'list,' which will include them in story listings on topic pages, source pages -- and perhaps even on the home page or in the newsletter listings. The following fields are required: URL, Title, Date, Source, Story Quote, Story Type, Editorial Priority, Topics. If any of them are empty, the story will continue to remain in pending status. You also have the option to add a mini-review with your overall rating, by simply clicking on the 'Add Review' checkbox. (Note that at this time, the mini-reviews will be added ONLY IF the story gets successfully listed.)

Then click on 'Submit All Changes.' This will post all of the stories you checked as 'listed', and will include any story ratings you gave each story, as long as the rest of the required story info has been filled in. This makes it a lot easier to fill up your site with interesting stories, leveraging your feeds to surface the latest content from the sources you follow.

Most other story tools are available by editing individual story pages. These story pages are not directly available in this section of the Admin Tools, but can be accessed by clicking on the blue 'Reviews' button next to any story title to go to its story page, then clicking on the pencil icon next to its share tools. See above instructions for editing story information.

Sources Tool

Click on 'Sources' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. It lets you add, edit, merge or delete sources on the entire site (e.g. news publications like CNN, the BBC or the [New York Times](#)).

To create a source, click on 'New Source' to open our creation form for sources. Then specify a source name, a slug, a domain, a URL, a section and editorial priority, as well as source ownership (select 'mainstream' if the source has over 1,000 employees or more than US \$10 million in annual revenue), and status (select 'list' to show this source profile in public, or click 'hide' to keep it hidden). You also have the option to allow comments for this source, or display a source logo.

When you are done setting these basic attributes for your new source, click 'Create.' This will create your source record and take you to the source edit page, where you can add more source info, as needed.

This admin source tool also lets you merge or delete sources, as needed. Other source tools are available from the individual source profile pages. For instructions on how to edit a source page, see our instructions above. It's also helpful to inspect the edit page for a fully edited profile such as the [New York Times](#). To edit a source profile, click on its name, and then click on the pencil icon next to its share tools.

Subjects Tool

Click on 'Subjects' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. It lets you edit subjects on the site. Subject pages are like the sections in the newspaper, including: [World](#), [Politics](#), [Business](#), or [Sci/Tech](#). Each subject page lists top stories, as well as some of its related topics. Subjects and topics have a parent-child relation where a subject can contain many topics, but one topic can belong to more than one subject. Apart from that difference, subject and topic pages have the same basic structure and share the same edit form functions, look and feel. However, you cannot create or delete subjects from the Admin Tools page, your developer will need to set up new subjects for you.

This admin subject tool allows you to edit subject information in the same way as you would on individual subject profile pages. For instructions on how to edit a subject page, see our instructions above. It's also helpful to inspect the edit page for a fully edited subject page such as [World](#). To edit a subject page, click on its name, and then click on the pencil icon next to its share tools.

Topics Tool

Click on 'Topics' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. It lets you add, edit or delete topics on the entire site. NewsTrust covers hundreds of [topics](#), such as the [Middle East](#), [Health Care](#), or the [Obama Administration](#). Like subjects, topics have their own pages, which display top stories and trusted sources, as well as comments. You can see the full list of topics by clicking the ['More'](#) button on the top navigation bar of our site.

To create a topic, click on 'Create Topic' to open our creation form for topics. Then specify a topic name, a slug, a domain and an optional introduction. You can specify a topic status (select 'list' to show this topic page in public, or click 'hide' to keep it hidden). You also have the option to enable comments for this topic, or specify the number of stories to display and how many days to go back to (using the Topic Volume field). Next, click on all the subjects that you think this topic belongs to, and select the appropriate subject sub-section, using the drop-down menu for the selected subject, if any.

When you are done setting these basic attributes for your new topic, click 'Create.' This will create your topic record and take you to the topic edit page, where you can add more topic info, as needed.

This topic edit tool can also be accessed in the topic pages. For instructions on how to edit a topic page, see our instructions above. It's also helpful to inspect the edit page for a fully edited topic such as the [Obama Administration](#). To edit a topic profile, click on its name, and then click on the pencil icon next to its share tools.

Tags Tool

Click on 'Tags' in the Admin Toolbar to access this tool. This tool was created for special batch operations to add topic tags for individual sources that are known to focus on specific topics. Specify a source name, then a topic name, an optional date range and click "Tag!" to automatically add that topic to all stories from that source during these dates. Use this tool carefully, as this action is hard to undo.

Code Block Samples

To create a new 'code block' for your home page, topic or group page, follow the instructions above, in the Admin Tools section.

Here's an example of a simple code block that displays a short welcome message about our Baltimore pilot site, which we featured in a sidebar box called 'About us'.

Slug: *about_baltimore*

Body: `Welcome to NewsTrust Baltimore!
`

`Join our local news experiment to find and share good journalism about Baltimore. This virtual news hub will feature some of the best news coverage about Baltimore, based on reviews from our community. (For U.S. and world stories, check out national site).
`

`Read more on our blog >>`
Editorial Space: *About us*

Here's another example of a more complex Javascript code block, which displays a signup badge for visitors, with a different badge for members who are already logged in. We recommend that you include a variation of this badge prominently in the sidebar of your home page, to encourage people to sign up on your site, while giving members and active members other options (note that this variable badge feature is only available for a single box per page).

Slug: *badge_signup_guide*

Body: `<script type="text/javascript">`

`var guest_badge_image_urls =`

`["http://media.newstrust.net/images/badges/v4/nt_badge_signup_newsfeeds_join.png"];`

`var guest_badge_target_urls = ["/members/new"];`

`var member_badge_image_urls = ["http://media.newstrust.net/images/badges/v4/nt_badges_quick_guide.png"];`

`var member_badge_target_urls = ["/guides/how-to-review"];`

`var active_member_badge_image_urls =`

`["http://media.newstrust.net/images/badges/v4/nt_badge_fillyourprofile.png"];`

`var active_member_badge_target_urls = ["/members/my_account#background"];`

`</script>`

`<div>`

``

`</div>`

`<div class="rotating_badge_div" style="width:295px;height:104px;">`

``

`</div>`

Editorial Space: *Featured Badge*

Here's another example of a more complex Javascript code block, which displays a signup badge for visitors, with a different badge for members who are already logged in. We recommend that you include a variation of this badge prominently in the sidebar of your home page, to encourage people to sign up on your site, while giving members and active members other options (note that this variable badge feature is only available for a single box per page).

Slug: *badge_signup_guide*

Body: `<script type="text/javascript">`

`var guest_badge_image_urls =`

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`["http://media.newstrust.net/images/badges/v4/nt_badge_fillyourprofile.png"];`

`var active_member_badge_target_urls = ["/members/my_account#background"];`

```
</script>
<div>

</div>
<div class="rotating_badge_div" style="width:295px;height:104px;">
<a href=""></a>
</div>
```

Editorial Space: Featured Badge

Lastly, this 'pre-baked' code block lets you add a 'Share this page' box in your sidebar, to encourage visitors to share your home page on social networks like Facebook, Twitter, by email or via AddThis (which supports hundreds of other networks).

```
Slug: share_this_page
Body: <%= share_icons_page("/", :class => "share_page_tools text", :fb_like_below => true, :fb_like_layout =>
"standard", :fb_like_width => "280", :fb_like_height => "27", :fb_share_type => "icon_link", :twitter_link_text =>
"Tweet", :email_link_text => "Email", :addthis_link_text => "More") %>
Editorial Space: Share This Page
```

To add a 'code block' into a specific 'sidebar box' on your home page, follow the instructions above.

Email Newsletter Samples

Here's an example of plain text and HTML headers and footers used for NewsTrust's weekly newsletter.

This Week's Subject:

This Week on NewsTrust | <Special Promotion> | <Story Title>

This Week's Plain Text Message Header:

Hello [MEMBER.FIRST_NAME],

This week, we would like to invite you to participate in <insert event promotion or special announcement here, with links to stories or pages you would like them to view>.

*Meanwhile, here are this week's top stories on NewsTrust.
For more news updates, visit the NewsTrust.net home page:
<http://newstrust.net/>*

*Or check your personal MyNews page:
<http://newstrust.net/mynews>*

This Week's Plain Text Message Footer:

*HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT NEWSTRUST
If you like what you see, there are many ways you can support our non-profit service. Here are some ideas to get you started.*

** REVIEW OFTEN
The more you review stories on our site, the smarter we get as a community. Simply click "Review" next to a story title, anywhere on our site. Try to answer as many questions as you can, to make your ratings count more. For the latest stories, start on our home page, in the 'For Review' section: <http://newstrust.net/>*

** FOCUS ON THE JOURNALISM*

Here at NewsTrust, we try to rate stories based on the quality of the journalism, not whether we agree with the views presented in these stories. If you haven't already, check our Reviewer FAQ for guidelines on how to review stories on our site:
<http://newstrust.net/help/faq/reviewer>

*** FILL IN YOUR PROFILE**

Please take a moment to update your member profile, so that other members can find out more about you. Be sure to add a picture if you haven't already. The more you share about yourself, the higher your member level, and the more your ratings count:
http://newstrust.net/members/my_account#profile

*** SUBMIT A STORY**

If you've come across a good story lately, please share it with us. Simply click on 'Submit' anywhere on our site - or use our Bookmarklet to quickly submit stories from any web page:
<http://newstrust.net/tools/bookmarklet>

*** INVITE A FRIEND**

Please invite your friends, family, or co-workers to join NewsTrust. Simply click on 'Invite' at the bottom of any page to send them a personal invitation:
<http://newstrust.net/members/invite>

*** TELL US WHAT YOU THINK**

We'd love to hear your comments and suggestions about our site. Please post your recommendations on our feedback page:
<http://newstrust.net/discussions/comments/1>

ABOUT NEWSTRUST

NewsTrust helps people find good journalism online. Our free website features a daily feed of quality news and opinion from independent and mainstream sources, based on ratings from our reviewers:
<http://newstrust.net/>

We rate the news based on quality, not just popularity. Our web review tools enable our members to evaluate fairness, evidence, sourcing and other core journalistic principles. NewsTrust is non-profit, non-partisan and encourages both news literacy and civic engagement.

Our mission is to help citizens make more informed decisions about our democracy.

It's a great way to get "news you can trust" all in one place. To find out more, check our About page: <http://newstrust.net/about/>

We're sending you this weekly newsletter because you signed up as a NewsTrust member and subscribed to this newsletter. This feed goes out every Wednesday at about 1PM PT (4PM ET).

To change your email settings, visit our Email Feeds page:
<http://www.NewsTrust.net/email/daily>

To IMMEDIATELY unsubscribe from our daily news feed, click here:
[UNSUBSCRIBE_URL]

NewsTrust treats your contact information as private and confidential. We will not share it with anyone without your permission. See our full privacy policy:
<http://newstrust.net/about/privacy>

(if clicking a web address in this message does not work, simply copy and paste it into your browser's address bar)

Copyright (c) 2011, NewsTrust - All Rights Reserved.

This Week's HTML Message Header:

Hello [MEMBER.FIRST_NAME],

This week, we would like to invite you to participate in <insert event promotion or special announcement here, with links to stories or pages you would like them to view>.

Meanwhile, here are this week's top stories on NewsTrust. For more news updates, visit the NewsTrust.net home page.

Or check your personal MyNews page.

This Week's HTML Message Footer:

```
<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr>
<td colspan=3>
<a href="http://newstrust.net/about?utm_campaign=weekly_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_source=footer"
class="sub_head">Support NewsTrust</a> <br>
</td>
</tr>

<tr>
<td colspan="3" class="story_quote">
If you would like to help NewsTrust, there are many ways you can support our non-profit service. Here are some
ideas to get you started.<br></td>
</tr>

<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>

<tr valign="top" >
<td colspan="3" class="body_black">
<a href="http://newstrust.net/stories/for_review">&bull;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;Review often</a><br>
<span class="story_quote">
The more you review stories on our site, the smarter we get as a community. Simply click "Review It" next to a story
title, anywhere on our site. Try to answer as many questions as you can, to make your ratings count more. For the
latest stories, start on our <a href="http://newstrust.net">home page</a>, in the 'For Review' section.<br></span>
</td></tr>

<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>

<tr valign="top" >
<td colspan="3" class="body_black">
<a href="http://newstrust.net/help/faq/reviewer">&bull;&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;Focus on the journalism</a><br>
<span class="story_quote">
Here at NewsTrust, we try to rate stories based on the quality of the journalism, not whether we agree with the
views presented in these stories. If you haven't already, check our <a
href="http://newstrust.net/help/faq/reviewer">Reviewer FAQ</a> for guidelines on how to review stories on our
site.<br></span>
</td></tr>
```

<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>

<tr valign="top" >

<td colspan="3" class="body_black">

• Fill in your profile

Please take a moment to update your member profile, so that other members can find out more about you. Be sure to add a picture if you haven't already. The more you share about yourself, the higher your member level, and the more your ratings count.

</td></tr>

<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>

<tr valign="top" >

<td colspan="3" class="body_black">

• Submit a Story

If you've come across a good story lately, please share it with us. Simply click on Submit anywhere on our site - or use our Bookmarklet to quickly submit stories from any web page.

</td>

</tr>

<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>

<tr valign="top" >

<td colspan="3" class="body_black">

• Invite a Friend

Please invite your friends, family, or co-workers to join NewsTrust. Simply click on Invite at the bottom of any page to send them a personal invitation.

</td></tr>

<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>

<tr valign="top" >

<td colspan="3" class="body_black">

• Tell us what you think

We'd love to hear your comments and suggestions about our site. Please post your recommendations on our feedback page.

</td></tr>

<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>

<tr> <td colspan="3"> <hr> </td></tr>

<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>

<tr>

<td colspan=3>

About NewsTrust

</td>

</tr>

<tr>

<td colspan="3" class="story_quote">

NewsTrust helps people find good journalism online. Our free website features a daily feed of quality news and opinion from independent and mainstream sources, based on ratings from our reviewers:
http://newstrust.net/

We rate the news based on quality, not just popularity. Our web review tools enable our members to evaluate fairness, evidence, sourcing and other core journalistic principles. NewsTrust is non-profit, non-partisan and encourages both news literacy and civic engagement. Our mission is to help citizens make more informed decisions about our democracy.

It's a great way to get "news you can trust" all in one place. To find out more, check our About Us page.
</td></tr>

<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>

<tr> <td colspan="3"> <hr> </td></tr>

<tr><td colspan="3"></td></tr>

<tr>

<td colspan=3>

About this Email

</td>

</tr>

<tr>

<td colspan="3" class="story_quote">

We're sending you this weekly news feed because you signed up as a NewsTrust member. This feed goes out every week at about 1PM PDT (4PM EDT).

To change your email settings, visit our Email Feeds page To IMMEDIATELY unsubscribe from our daily news feed, click here.

NewsTrust treats your contact information as private and confidential. We will not share it with anyone without your permission. To see our privacy policy, click here.

Copyright (c) 2011, NewsTrust - All Rights Reserved. </td></tr>

Partner Invitation Page Sample

Here's an example of the HTML script for a partner invitation page (also called welcome page or partner sign up page), in this case for [USA Today](#).

Welcome Page (left column):

```
<div>
<IMG src="http://media.newstrust.net/images/partners/USAToday-Logo.png">
</div>
<div></div>
<h2>Welcome, USA Today Reader!</h2>
<div></div>
<h4><a href="">Join our <em>Immigration News Hunt</em></a>.</h4>
How are the news media covering Arizona's new immigration law?
```

To find out, join our *Immigration News Hunt* with our partners [USA Today](http://www.usatoday.com/) and its [*On Deadline*](http://content.usatoday.com/communities/ondeadline) blog. For two weeks, starting July 19, 2010, we will collectively look for good journalism about **immigration** -- with a focus on Arizona's new immigration law.

```
<a
href="http://blog.newstrust.net/2010/07/immigration.html?utm_campaign=immigration&utm_medium=welcome_page" target="_blank">Read more on our blog</a>, where we will post the results of this News Hunt on Wednesday, August 4.
```

Can you help us find some of the best (and worst) news coverage of this controversial topic?

To get started, follow these easy steps:

```
<h3 style="margin-bottom:6px"><a href="">1) Sign up</a></h3>
To join the News Hunt, login through Facebook:<br/>
<={fb_login_button(/partners/usatoday/immigration\-\2, long)}=><br/>
... or fill in the form to the right. This will let you review stories on NewsTrust, get our email newsletters, and use our _MyNews_ tool.
```

```
<h3 style="margin-bottom:6px"><a href="http://newstrust.net/topics/immigration" target="_blank">2) Review stories</a></h3>
Once you are signed up, we invite you to review stories on our Immigration page. To review a story on NewsTrust, click its yellow 'Review' button and answer a couple questions about the quality of this story.
```

```
<h3 style="margin-bottom:6px"><a href="http://newstrust.net/post" target="_blank">3) Post new stories</a></h3>
If you come across other recent stories about Immigration, please share them with us. To post a story, click the yellow Post button in the top navbar of our site. (Add Immigration as a topic for any story you post on this issue.)
```

If you have any questions, <mailto:editors@newstrust.net>, "email us", :subject => 'USA Today help request', :encode => "javascript" %>. Happy Hunting!

Welcome Page Sidebar (left column):

```
<div style="width:400px; margin-top:6px">
<div></div>
<p style="margin-top:6px;">Sign up here to become a member of NewsTrust, our nonprofit social news network. This will let you review stories on NewsTrust, get our free email newsletters and use _MyNews_.</p>
</div>
<={page}>
```