# About the Users Guide

This Guide explains how to use the features of the SLA Communities of Practice (CoP) Web Site and connect with other members, information about upcoming events, access to important documents, and other useful information. CoP enables you to:

- Create a Personal Page where you'll have instant access to the information YOU need
- Join or request new, independent Communities of Practice focusing on topics important to you and other members of that particular CoP
- Use the internal messaging system to communicate with other SLA members
- Chat with other members on-line in "real" time

Look for context-specific help found by clicking on the Help link within each section heading on site pages as well.

We've segmented the information into two types:

- Overview information. These sections cover the contents, features, and ways to use the major windows such as your Personal Page or a CoP page.
- Step-by-step instructions. These instructions clearly walk you through a process such as changing your screen resolution.

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# SLA Communities Web Site Technical Requirements

The following requirements are suggested in order for your Communities of Practice experience to be as valuable as possible.

## Minimum Requirements

### Operating System

- Windows 95
- Windows 98
- Windows NT 4.0
- Windows 2000
- Windows XP

### Browser Software

- Microsoft Internet Explorer version 6.0 or higher
- Netscape Communicator version 6.1 or higher
- **SPECIAL NOTE FOR AOL USERS:** AOL users should access the Internet through AOL, then open IE or Netscape to visit the SLA Communities of Practice web site.

## Checking for Required Browser Version

### Microsoft Internet Explorer

1. Open your browser.
2. Click Help on its top menu bar.
3. Click About Internet Explorer. A popup window displays information about your browser. The version number is the first item listed.

### Netscape Communicator

1. Open your browser.
2. Click Help on your top menu bar.
3. Click About Communicator. A popup window displays information on your browser, including the version number.

## Upgrading Browser Software

The more recent your browser version, the better you can take advantage of available features while using the Internet. Both Microsoft and Netscape maintain websites that provide free downloads of recent versions of their browsers.

**Note:** Browser files are large and can take a long tome to download if you are using a dial-up connection.

### Microsoft Internet Explorer

1. Go to http://www.microsoft.com/downloads. (If clicking this link does not work, copy and paste the address into your browser address box and click "Go." You will be taken to Microsoft's Download Center Home Page.
2. Click the "Internet" link in the left frame. Because this is a popular download, it's usually listed in the "Most Popular Downloads" section at the top of the page. Click the link (As of this writing, the version available is Internet Explorer 6, Service Pack 1.) If you do not see it, use the drop-down list box below to select "Explorer" and then click "Go."
3. Click the "Download" link (currently found on the right side of the page) and save the program to disk.

**Netscape**

1. Go to http://channels.netscape.com/ns/browsers/download.jsp. (If clicking this link does not work, copy and paste the address into your browser address box and click "Go.") You will be taken to Netscape's Browser Download page.
2. In the "Download Netscape Browser" (as of this writing, it's Netscape 7.1) box, click the Download button.
3. You'll find a link to "Installation Instructions" directly below.

## Setting Your Browser to Accept Cookies

Cookies are data files written to your hard drive by some web sites when you view them in your browser, so the server can identify you. A cookie is needed so that the CoP site can recognize you and open your Personal Page without needed to log in again. If you have your browser security setting at "high," you will not be able to view your page.

You do not have to accept cookies in order to use the CoP site. Cookies are used just as a convenience.

If you are not sure if your browser is set to accept cookies or would like to change your settings, here's what to do:

**Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher**

1. Open your browser.
2. From the menu bar, select Tools > Internet Options.
3. When the Internet Options window opens, select the Privacy tab.
4. Drag and drop the slider bar to Low.
5. Click OK.

**Netscape 6.1 or higher**

1. Open Netscape.
2. From the menu bar, select **Edit > Preferences**.
3. In the left frame, Double-click **Privacy** and Security to **expand the list.**
4. Click **Cookies**. Choose the Enable All Cookies radio button.
5. Click OK.

## Deleting Cookies

In some instances, you may need to delete your old cookies in order to login to the site.

**Internet Explorer**

1. Start your browser.
2. From the top menu bar, select **Tools > Internet Options**.
3. A pop-up window with Internet Options will appear. Under the Temporary Internet Files section, click on the Delete Cookies button.
4. It may take a few minutes for your computer to delete all your cookies. Once the task is complete, click on the OK button at the bottom.

**Netscape 6.1 or higher**

1. Open Netscape.
2. From the top menu bar, click on **Tools > Cookie Manager > Manage Stored Cookies**.
3. The Manage Stored Cookies window opens.
    a. To delete all of your cookies:
        i. Click **Remove All Cookies**.
        ii. Click **OK**.
    b. To delete only the cookies related to the Communities of Practice.
        i. The **View and Remove Cookies that are stored on your computer** panel lists all cookies by site. Select the cookies related to cop.sla.org.
        ii. Click the **Remove Cookie** button.
        iii. Click **OK**.

## Checking Your Operating System

It's possible you'll need to contact technical support at some point with a question. You'll need to know what operating system and version your computer uses. To find out:

1. From your desktop, right-click the My Computer icon.
2. Left-click Properties. The System Properties window opens.
3. System information appears on the General page.

## Pop-Up Blocker Software

Some areas of the Communities of Practice web site use new windows to view information. If you are using pop-up blocker software such as Pop-Up Stopper, Zero Popup, or similar applications from sites such as Google, AOL, or Earthlink, you will not be able to view some content. The SLA web site does not deploy advertisements in pop up windows, and it is recommended that pop up blocker software be turned off while you are interacting within the CoP site.

## JavaScript and Java Applets

The chat feature of the Communities of Practice web site uses java scripts and applets to execute the chat window. If you do not have the Java Plug-In already installed on your browser, you will see the following message and/or icon:

### Internet Explorer 6.0 or higher

When Internet Explorer first encounters a web page that specifies Java Plug-in, Internet Explorer will open a message window and ask the user if it is OK to download an ActiveX control that is digitally signed by Sun Microsystems, Inc. and verifiable by the associated certificate.

1. Click "Yes." Internet Explorer will quickly download a small ActiveX control from Sun's web site that will handle downloading the main Java Plug-in ActiveX control and Sun's JRE. This will include selecting the appropriate locale-specific JRE and offering the user a list of suitable download sites. It will then download the files automatically and install them.
2. The Java Plug-in ActiveX control will then run.
3. The next time Internet Explorer encounters a web page that specifies the Java Plug-in, Internet Explorer will seamlessly load and run the ActiveX control, requiring no user intervention.

### Netscape 6.1 or higher

When Navigator first encounters a web page that specifies Java Plug-in, users will see a plugin-missing picture on the HTML page.

1. Click on this picture to go to the Java Plug-in download page.
2. Download the appropriate version of the Java Plug-in in accordance with your Operating System and install it.
3. Java Plug-in will then run render the applet.
4. The next time Navigator encounters a web page that specifies the Java Plug-in, Navigator will seamlessly load and run the plug-in, requiring no user intervention.

If you are still having problems connecting to Chat, and are connecting to the chat from a company network, you may need to contact your IS department to let them know they need to open ports 7777 and 7877. This will allow you to connect to the chat.

# Connecting to the Internet

| Connection Method | Comments |
|---|---|
| Dial-up modem with ISP (Internet Service Provider) | Because dial-up access uses normal telephone lines, the quality of the connection is not always good and data rates are limited. The maximum data rate is about 56 Kbps (56,000 bits per second). |
| ISDN | **I**ntegrated **S**ervices **D**igital **N**etwork, an international communications standard for sending voice, video, and data over digital telephone lines or normal telephone wires. ISDN supports data transfer rates of 64 Kbps (64,000 bits per second). |
| DSL | Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line allows more data to be sent over existing copper telephone lines. ADSL supports data rates of from 1.5 to 9 Mbps when receiving data (known as the *downstream* rate) and from 16 to 640 Kbps when sending data (known as the *upstream* rate). |
| Cable | Cable modems send digital signals on a cable network converting the signals into IP packets and routing the signals to an Internet Service Provide for connection to the Internet. Speeds vary but are about the same as a DSL connection. |
| Corporate LAN (Local Area Network) connections | T-1 lines are a popular leased line option for businesses connecting to the Internet and for Internet Service Providers (ISPs) connecting to the Internet backbone. The Internet backbone itself consists of faster T-3 connections. |

**Note:** If you experience performance problems such as slow loading pages when you access the SLA web site, it's important to know your connection type. If it's a dial-up, there is nothing we can do to increase performance.

## Changing Monitor Resolution

The majority of web pages are designed for monitor set to a resolution of 800 x 600 pixels. Newer systems are likely to use higher settings. If you'd like to adjust the settings for your monitor, do the following:

1. With your computer's desktop displayed, click the right button on your mouse. A popup menu displays.
2. Select Properties. The Display Properties dialog box displays.
3. Click the Setting tab.
4. Click and drag the sliding arrow in the Screen area to adjust the resolution of your monitor.
5. Click Apply; then click OK. Your monitor setting has now been adjusted.

# Logging In and Out

The system uses a login procedure to protect you and the system from unauthorized access. Logging in gives you access to custom information on your personal and community pages.

1. In the Login field, enter your last name.
2. In the PIN field, enter your password. Your default password is the PIN # found on your membership card. (You may change your password in your SLA member profile.)
3. If you want this information to be automatically entered the next time you log in, click the Remember Me checkbox. (It is recommended that you don't choose this option if other people have access to your system.) **Note:** Your browser must accept cookies for this function to operate. If you use Internet Explorer, go to **Tools > Internet Options**. If you use Netscape, go to **Edit > Preferences**. Choose "Accept all cookies." Your browser's help materials should provide detailed information or you can review the *Setting Your Browser to Accept Cookies* in the *Technical Requirements* section of this Guide.
4. Click **Login**. Your Personal Page displays. Your personal page is an information center you can customize to meet your needs.

## Having problems logging in?

If you attempted to log in and received a request to try again, you should:

- Make sure you entered both fields correctly
- Click **Forgot your PIN?** to have your password e-mailed to you. This works only if SLA has your current email address.

If you have selected the Remember Me checkbox, you should:

- Check to see that your browser is set to accept cookies
- Delete cookies and try logging in again

## Retrieving a Lost PIN

If you can't recall your PIN, you can have it emailed to you.

1. Begin at the CoP Home Page.
2. Click **Forgot your PIN?**.
3. Enter the Internet e-mail address you have given to SLA.
4. Click **Submit**. If the e-mail address matches the address SLA has on file for you, your password will be e-mailed to you.

# Your Personal Home Page

## Setting Preferences

To set the time to your local time zone:

1. From your Personal Page, click **Preferences**, found on the top Menu bar. The My Preferences window opens.
2. Click the down arrow in the drop-down list box to select the appropriate time zone. If your time zone is not available, select Other, then enter the appropriate number of zones between your time zone and the US Eastern time zone. (For example, if you are on Greenwich Mean Time, enter +5)
3. Click **Update**. Your time zone is set.

## Entering My CoP Profile

If you'd like other SLA CoP members to know more about you, you can fill out your profile page and even add a photo. Others will be able to access your profile when you post a resource or a message to a discussion board.

1. To create or edit your SLA CoP profile, click the **My Profile** icon (a Rolodex) found at the top of a community page or your Personal Page.
2. You'll see 4 fields and a text box into which to enter information. Click into each of the fields and enter your first name, middle name, last name, and email address. Note that the e-mail address entered in your profile will be used by the system to send notifications about communities you join and new messages waiting for you in the CoP internal messaging system. You can use the text box to share more information about yourself with others in the community.
3. Click the Browse button to upload from your computer a photo of yourself. Make sure the photo is in jpg or gif format and that the file size is 40KB or smaller. We recommend that your photo measure 150 pixels wide and 180 pixels high.
4. Click **Update**. This updates your profile and closes the window.
5. You can view your new profile. Click the **Personal Home** tab to return to your Personal Page.

# Moving Between Your Communities

## Accessing Your Communities

The My Communities panel on your Personal Page links you to the communities of practice you have joined.

1. To access a community, click the name of the community. The community page displays.
2. To join a community, click on the **Join / Visit Communities** icon found at the top of your Personal Page. On that page you can either click **Search** to find a community based on a keyword or topic you are interested in or click on a letter of the alphabet to view communities whose names start with that letter. To view all communities at once, click on the View All link. After you have found a community that you'd like to participate in, click the check box next to the community you want to join, then click **Join Communities** button at the bottom of the page. If you would like to review the community's content before joining, click on the community name. You will then be redirected to the community home page, with permissions to view only the content listed on the home page. To participate in the community and/or view additional information found under the View All links, you must join the community.
3. To remove a community from your list, click the **Unsubscribe** icon found at the top of your Personal Page. On the page which displays, click into the check box of community you want to remove, then click **Unjoin** button**.**

To navigate directly to your other Communities from any Community Page without returning to your Personal Page:

1. From any Community page, click the down arrow of the My Communities drop-down list box, found at the top of the left frame of the page.
2. Select the community you want to view. The new Community Page displays.

# Working with My Links

It's easy to add links to your favorite web sites to your Personal Page.

## Creating Categories for Links

Links can be listed within categories. You can create a "general" category if you do not wish to create multiple categories right away. Eventually you may want to organize your links into categories for easier navigation.

1. Click **Manage Links** in the header of the My Links panel. The Manage Links window displays.
2. Click **Manage Categories** link in the top right-hand corner of the page to create categories.
3. Click on the **New Categories** link in the top right-hand corner of the page. The New Categories window displays.
4. Enter a name for your new category and click **Create Category**. This adds the category to your list.

## Listing New Links

1. Click **Add Link** in the header of the My Links panel. Or click **Manage Links**, then click **New Links** in the top right-hand corner of the page.
2. The Add a Personal Link window displays.
3. Enter the title you want to give the link.
4. Type the link's URL address. (It's best to copy and paste this information for accuracy.)
5. Click the down arrow on the drop-down list box to view and select the Category you want the link listed under.
6. Enter keywords for the link that will help you find it at a later time.
7. Enter a description of the link to help you remember its purpose.
8. Click **Submit Personal Link**. The link will appear on your Personal page.

## Editing Links

Use this function to edit information about existing links in your My Links panel.

1. Click **Manage Links**.
2. Click the **Edit** link to the right of the link you want to edit. The Edit Personal Link window displays.
3. Make any needed changes to the information.
4. Click **Update Personal Link**.

## Deleting Links

1. Click **Manage Links**. The Manage Links window displays.
2. Click **Delete** to the right of the link you want to delete. The link is deleted.

# Using Search / Advanced Search

## Search

The Search function is found at the top of the left frame on your Personal Page and all Community Pages. To perform a simple search:

1. Enter a keyword in the text box. To search using more than one keyword, use "AND" between each keyword if you want to find results that include all of your keywords. Use "OR" between each keyword if you want to find results that include any one of your keywords.
2. The system will search for phrases that match exactly what you enter.
3. From your Personal Page, click either the My Communities (ones you have already listed on your Personal Page) radio button or the All Communities radio button. From the community home page, click the upper radio button to search the current Community; click the lower radio button to search All Communities within the CoP site.
4. Click Search. The Search panel opens, displaying a list of results ranked by probability score in the right frame.
    a. If you are a member of the community(ies) where results have been found, click any **Community : Module** link to go directly to the community page providing the result. If you are not a member of the community where the resource was found, you must join the community in order to gain access. You can immediately tell if you are not a member of a community when there is a Join link under the **Community : Module** name.
    b. If you are a member of the community(ies) where results have been found, click the **Title / Summary** link to go directly to the information.

## Advanced Search

The Advanced Search function allows you to specify modules and specific communities to refine your search.

1. Access Advanced Search by clicking the **Advanced** link on the Search header found at the top left frame of the CoP Home or Personal Page. The Advanced Search page opens.
2. Enter your keyword(s) in the Keyword text box. To search using more than one keyword, use "AND" between each keyword if you want to find results that include all of your keywords. Use "OR" between each keyword if you want to find results that include any one of your keywords.
3. Click the checkbox(es) underneath the module heading you want included in your search. The modules you can search include the following:

    **Events**
    - Title
    - Detail

    **Frequently Asked Questions**
    - Title
    - Answer
    - Keywords
    - Category Name
    - Community Name
    - First Name
    - Last Name

    **Discussion Board**
    - Name of poster
    - Title
    - Content

    **Help**
    - Website help information

    **Link**
    - Title

**News**

- Title
- Answer
- Keywords
- Category Name
- Community Name
- First Name
- Last Name

**Polling**

- Name
- Question
- Answers

**Resources**

- Category
- Keywords
- Title
- Resource
- Content

4. Select either All Communities, All My Communities, or Select Communities by clicking the appropriate radio button.
5. If you've chosen Select Communities, click the down arrow on the drop-down list box and select the Communities you wish to search on. If you would like to select multiple community names, press your control key at the same time you left-mouse click to highlight the community name. You can select as many communities as you want using this method.
6. Click **Search**. Your search results display.

# Event Calendars

## Viewing Upcoming SLA Events

You'll find news of upcoming SLA events as the second category in the left frame of your Personal page. To learn more about an event:

1. Click the link. The information displays in a new window.
2. To print the information, click **Print Event**. Follow your printer's directions.
3. Click the small "x" in the upper right corner of the window to close it.

### Viewing All SLA Events

To view a complete list of SLA events:

1. Click the **All Events** link.
2. Click an event to view details. The events display in a new window.
3. Click the small "x" in the upper right corner of the window to close it.

## Working with My Events Calendar

You can track events important to you on your My Events calendar, found in the right frame of your Personal Page.

## Adding an Event to Your Calendar

1. Click **Add Event** in the header of the calendar. The Add Event window displays.
2. Enter a title for the event.
3. Enter the Start and End Dates or click **Select** and choose the date from the calendar which displays.
4. Enter the start and end times of the event.
5. Enter a description of the event helpful to you in the Details field.
6. Click **Update**. The event is added to your calendar and you're returned to your Personal Page.

## To View Events You've Added to Your Calendar:

1. Dates on your calendar with events are underlined and italicized. Click the date to view the details. The day's events appear on a new page. To return to your personal page, click the **Back** button of your browser or the **Personal Page** tab at the top of the page.
2. To view all your events, click **All Events** at the top of your calendar. The All Upcoming Events page displays. To return to your personal page, click the **Back** button of your browser or the **Personal Page** tab at the top of the page.

## To Edit an Event on Your Calendar

1. From your Personal Page, click either the calendar date of the event or All Events.
2. From the page that appears, click on the event itself. A new window displays.
3. Click **Edit Event** tab, found at the top left of the window. The Edit Event window displays.
4. Enter your edits in the appropriate field(s). Use the right scroll bar to scroll down the page.
5. Click **Update** to save your edits.
6. Click the small "x" in the upper right corner of the window to close it.

## Printing an Event from Your Calendar

1. Begin with the event displayed in the Event window.
2. Click **Print Event** tab, found in the middle of the window. Your printer menu will display. Follow its instructions.

## Deleting an Event from Your Calendar

1. Begin with the event to be deleted displayed in the Event window.
2. Click **Delete Event** tab, to the right of **Edit Event** tab. The pop-up window requests a confirmation.
3. Click **Confirm: Delete Event** tab. The window closes. You will continue to see the event on the page until you refresh it (**View>Refresh**).

# Suggesting a New Community

If you can't find the community you're looking for under the **All Communities Available** list or one that matches a keyword that you've entered in the **Search**, use this function to request that the Community be formed.

1. Click the **Suggest a Community** icon on the Top Navigation Bar or the Suggest a Community link in the header of the My Communities panel on your Personal Page. The Suggest A Community window displays.
2. Click into the fields provided to describe the Community you want to request. Try to be explicit as you describe the benefits your Community would provide to SLA members.
3. Provide one or more keywords to help potential members locate the Community in a search.
4. Answer the **Facilitator Questions**.
5. Click the down arrow of the drop-down list box and select the name of any Community to which your new community might be related, if applicable.
6. Provide other relevant information that would help the SLA staff in reviewing your request in the text field below.
7. Click **Submit Suggestion**. SLA staff reviews all suggestions for appropriateness and to avoid redundancy. You will be notified of their decision.

**Note:** For a new community to be created, at least one facilitator must oversee activities. As the person suggesting the new Community, you're the most obvious person to serve as Facilitator, or you may know someone who would like to serve. Facilitators are SLA members who volunteer to support and champion the success of a particular Community. These volunteers monitor activity within the Community, encourage member participation, and organize Community events (virtual or face-to-face). Duties of a facilitator include:

- Starting discussions
- Polling Community members
- Updating content
- Ensuring members' questions are answered
- Coordinating member communications
- Identifying and using experts
- Scheduling and hosting chat sessions
- Managing and organizing Community resources
- Planning Community events beyond the virtual community

# Polling

## Taking Part in a Poll

The Poll (and alternatively, the Poll Results) you see on your Personal page are developed and posted by SLA staff. The polls you see on the Community pages are developed by facilitators and community members.

If a poll is available, it is displayed in the poll area. If you participate in the poll, the Poll panel displays the results of the poll (updated after you have voted) during the polling period. To participate in a poll:

1. Click on the appropriate response(s).
2. Click Vote to register your response(s). Current poll voting statistics display after the page refreshes.

## Submitting a Poll Topic

If you have an issue you'd like to get membership opinion on, we encourage you to submit it. Polls can be submitted on your Personal Page and all Community Pages of which you are a member.

1. Click the Submit Poll link. The Submit Poll window displays.
2. Enter in the title for your poll in the text field.
3. Enter your question and possible answers you'd like membership to choose from. Question can be structure as multiple choice, scale, or yes/no.
4. Click the checkbox if you want the participant to be able to make multiple selections.
5. Click Submit Query. SLA staff (for the Personal page poll) or your Community's facilitator (for Community polls) will review your poll for appropriateness and if accepted, will place it in the queue.

# Notifications

## Notification of Community Activity

If you've provided a valid email address in your Member Profile and have elected to receive notifications from either communities you are a member of or the internal messaging system, you will receive Community Notifications whenever something new has been added. (Click **Profile Update** to update or change your email address.)

To receive notifications in the messaging system:

1. Click the **Messaging** icon.
2. Click the **Mail Preferences** tab at the top of the page.
3. Select either the "Yes" or the "No" radio button to determine if you wish to be sent notification to your external Internet e-mail that you have received messages in your CoP mail account.
4. Click Update to save your choice. The window closes.

To receive notification from one of your communities:

1. From any community page, click **Notifications**, found in the top menu bar.
2. You will see drop-down list boxes allowing you to choose the frequency of notification of new items for Events, FAQs, Discussion, Link, News, Poll, and Resources.
3. Select your preferred frequency of notification for the choices available to you (Don't Notify, Hourly, Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Immediately).
4. Click **Set Notifications**. You'll receive email notifications according to the schedule you've selected
5. Click the **Community Home** tab to return to your community

## About the Facilitators

Volunteer facilitators monitor community activities, encourage members to participate, and organize events. You can learn about these volunteers on the **About the Facilitators** page, where you'll find in most cases a short biography and photo, and a message link.

1. Click the **About the Facilitators** link found at the top of the community's home page. The **About the Facilitators** page opens.
2. Read the information.
3. If you wish to contact the facilitator, click **Send Message**, located to the right of the facilitator's name. The Compose a Message window displays pre-addressed to the facilitator.
4. Follow standard procedures for completing your message--enter a subject in the subject field and your message in the message field.
5. Click **Submit Message**. The Folder : Inbox page opens with a message that your message has been sent. Use your browser back button to return to the About the Facilitators page, where you can click either **Personal Home** or **Community Home** as you choose.

# Related Communities

If the keywords entered by your community facilitators match other Communities, you'll find those communities listed in the **Related Communities** panel. Communities that you are already a member of will be linked; if you are not already a member and would like to visit a related community, click the **Join / Visit Communities** icon to explore these other communities. If there are several related communities, you'll find a View All link next to the Help link.

## Join a Related Community

To become a member of a related community:

1. Click the **Subscribe** link found to the right of the community name to join.
2. The community will now appear on your My Communities panel on your Personal page and in your My Communities drop down on community pages. It is also linked within the Related Community box.

## View All Related Communities

To view all the communities related to your community:

1. Click **View All**. You'll see all related communities.
2. Click **Subscribe links** to join any of these communities or go to **Join / Visit Communities** to explore.

# Chat with Peers

Chatting is a way to communicate with your colleagues in "realtime." All members logged into a specific chat time or session can communicate back and forth by keying in their comments and reading others' messages. Productive chat sessions should be scheduled ahead of time, using the email and events calendar function, and have specific topics and moderators selected.

To participate in a chat session:

1. Click **Chat With Peers** on the Community page. The Community Chat page displays. The left column lists any individuals present. Chat session text is found in the main text box.
2. To participate, enter your comments in the line near the bottom of the window and click Send. The screen refreshes to show your comment.
3. Click **Log off** to end your session. The page remains on the screen. The screen will no longer update with new comments. Exit the page by clicking the **Community Home** link. Reconnect by clicking **Log On**.

You can customize the look of the chat screen using the icons at the bottom of the screen to set your color preferences and to send icons with your text. Bold and Italic icons are also available to enhance the text displayed when you submit your comment.

## Having a Private Chat with a Single Chat Participant

To set up a private discussion:

1. Select the participant's name from the left column list.
2. Click the Private Chat button. A Private Chat window pops up.
3. Have your conversation.
4. When you're finished, click Exit. The window closes and you are returned to the group chat.

# Using the Community Events Calendar

The Community Events Calendar provides a month-at-a-glance of events scheduled for the current month.

- Dates with scheduled events appear as links.
- Click the previous and next arrows on either side of the date to view other month's calendars.

## Viewing an Event from the Community Page

Events for the current month are displayed underneath the calendar. To access information about a specific event:

1. Click its link. A pop-window displays the information.
    a. To print the information, click **Print Event**.
2. To view all events, click **All Events**.
3. Click the small "x" at the upper right of the window to close it.

## Viewing Events for a Specific Date

Dates with scheduled events are shown as links (underlined and italicized). To learn what events are scheduled:

1. From the Community page, click the date.
2. The list of events displays. Click the event you wish to view in detail.
3. Click **Print Event** to print the event.
4. Click **Community Home** to return to the community page.

## Viewing All Events

1. From the Community page, click **All Events**.
2. The list of scheduled events appears. To learn more about an event, click the link. The information displays.
3. To print the information, click **Print Event**.
4. Click the small "x" at the upper right of the window to close it.
5. Click the **Community Home** tab at the top of the page to return to the community home page.

# Participating in Community Polls

The polls you see on the Community pages are developed by facilitators and community members.

If a poll is available, it is displayed in the poll area. If you participate in the poll, the Poll panel displays the results of the poll (and updates when you refresh the page) during the polling period.

To participate in a poll:

1. Click on the appropriate response(s).
2. Click **Vote** to register your response(s). Current poll voting statistics display.

## Suggesting a Poll

If you have an issue about which you'd like community feedback on, we encourage you to submit it.

1. Click the **Submit Poll** link. The Submit Poll window displays.
2. Enter in the title for your poll in the text field.
3. Enter your question and possible answers you'd like membership to choose from. Question can be structure as multiple choice, scale, or yes/no.
4. Click the checkbox if you want the participant to be able to make multiple selections.
5. Click **Submit Query**. Your community's facilitator will review your poll for appropriateness and if accepted, will place it in the queue.

# Viewing/Submitting Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The Community FAQ panel lists Frequently Asked Questions and answers grouped by category. The information is listed either in order of the most-asked questions or in order of the newest questions. Each question provides the author's name and date/time when submitted. Community Facilitators can move a FAQ to the top of the list if it is particularly timely.

## Viewing a FAQ Displayed on Community Page

Community FAQs are found in the top panel of the page.

1. Click the FAQ to view it. The information displays.
2. Click Community Home to return to the Community page.

## Viewing All FAQs for the Current Community

There may be additional FAQs not viewable directly on the Community page. To check for additional FAQs:

1. Click **View All**. All questions display.
2. Your viewing options include:
    a. Scrolling to view the full list
    b. Clicking the links at the top of the columns and re-sorting the by Category, by Author, by Number of Times Viewed, and by Date Submitted, depending on your needs.
    c. Clicking the drop-down list box to select and display FAQs in a single category.
    d. Clicking a single question.
3. Click **Community Home** to return to the community page.

## Submitting a FAQ

You can post questions and answers to the FAQ section of your community.

1. Click **Submit FAQ** from the FAQ header on the Community page or the tab found at the top of the **View All** window. The Suggest FAQ page displays.
2. Chose a category for your FAQ from the drop-down list box.
3. Enter appropriate keywords in the Keywords field to enable community members to locate your FAQ during a search.
4. Enter your question in the Question field.
5. Enter your answer in the Answer field.
6. Click **Submit FAQ**. Your FAQ suggestion will be reviewed and acted upon by the Community Facilitator
7. Return to your Personal Home Page or to the Community Page by clicking the tab at the top of the page.

# Viewing/Submitting Community News

The Community News panel lists news items by category. Each news item lists the author's name and date/time submitted.

## Viewing News

The number of news items shown on the Community Page is limited by available space, and only recently posted items are listed. To view an item:

1. Click the news item link. The news item displays.
2. Click the **Community Home** tab at the top of the page to return to the community page.

## Viewing All News for the Current Community

You can also view the entire list of posted news for a Community.

1. Click **View All**. All new items display.
2. Scroll to view the full list of news items or click the down arrow on the drop down list box to select a single category.
3. Click the **Community Home** tab at the top of the page to return to the community page.

## Submit News

It's easy to post news items you think might be of interest to other members of the Community.

1. Click **Submit News** link in the header of the Community News panel, or the **Submit News** tab at the top of the page when viewing a news item or the View All page.
2. Enter a News Title for your news item in the News Title text field.
3. Select a Category from the drop-down list box.
4. Enter appropriate keywords in the Keywords field to enable community members to locate your item during a search.
5. Enter your content in the Content field. A scroll bar appears on the right if the message is longer than the window. You can use the tool bar in the content field to create italics, links, bolding, and so forth.
6. Click **Submit Community News**. Your news item will be reviewed and acted upon by the Community Facilitator.
7. Return to your Personal Home Page or to the Community Page by clicking the appropriate tab at the top of the page.

# Viewing/Submitting Community Links

Community Links are links to other Web sites of interest to community members. Links listed in the Community Links panel are grouped by category. Each link shows the author's name and date/time submitted.

## Viewing Links

To access a Community Link:

1. Click the URL link. A pop-up window displays the Web site.
2. Click the small "x" in the upper right of the window to close it.

## Viewing All Links for the Current Community

To view the entire list of links:

1. Click the **View All** link to display all links.
2. To choose a link:
    a. Scroll to view the full list.
    b. Click the links at the top of the columns and re-sort the full list by Category, by URL, by Submitted By, and by Submitted On.
    c. Click the down arrow on the drop-down list box to select a single category to view.
3. Click the link you want to explore. The site displays in a new window.
4. Click the small "x" in the upper right of the window to close it.
5. Click the Community Home tab at the top of the page to return to the community page.

## Submitting Links

It's easy to post news items you think might be helpful to community members.

1. Click **Submit Link** in the header of the Community Links panel or in the header of a link item. The Submit Link page opens.
2. Enter your link's Title in the Title field.
3. Enter the **URL** in the URL field. (Hint: It's best to copy and paste the link rather than to attempt to key it in.)
4. Click the down arrow of the drop-down list box to select a category.
5. Enter **Keywords** in the Keyword field to enable members to locate your link during a search.
6. Enter a helpful description of the site in the description field.
7. Click **Submit Community Link**. Your link will be reviewed and acted upon by the Community Facilitator.

# Viewing/Submitting Community Resources & Best Practices

Community Resources & Best Practices are documents members want to share with each other -- sample forms, guidelines, presentations, and so forth. The Community Resources & Best Practices panel groups these resources by category. Each link gives the file type, file size, author's name and date/time submitted.

All files are automatically scanned for viruses before they are added to a Community and made available to other Community members. Self-executable files (identified with a .exe file extension) are not permitted on the SLA CoP web site.

## Viewing Resources & Best Practices

The number of resources shown on the Community Page is limited by available space, and only lists recently posted items. To view a resource:

1. Click **Resource**. Your browser temporarily downloads the file to your hard drive, then opens it in a new window using the appropriate application. You can read, save, and/or or print the file as appropriate.
2. Click the back button in your browser window to return to the CoP page.

## Viewing All Resources & Best Practices for the Current Community

You can view the complete list of resources posted:

1. Click the **View All** link found in the Community Resources & Best Practices header. All resources display.
2. To view a resource:
    a. Scroll to view the full list.
    b. Click the links at the top of the columns and re-sort the full list by **Title**, **Submitted By** and by **Submitted On**.
    c. Click the down arrow on the drop-down list box to select a single category to view.
3. Click the link to view the resource. Your browser opens it using the appropriate application.
4. Click the back button in your browser window to return to the Community Resources & Best Practices page.
5. Click the **Community Home** tab at the top of the page to return to the CoP home page.

## Submitting Resources & Best Practices

It's easy to post resources you think might be of interest to community members.

**Note:** Make sure you seek, gain and INCLUDE IN THE DOCUMENT permission for copyrighted materials or materials owned by your employer before posting and/or the source or owner of the document.

1. Click **Submit Resource** in the header of the Community Resources & Best Practices panel or the **Submit Resource** tab at the top of the View All page. The Submit Resource page displays.
2. Click the down arrow in the drop-down list box to select a category.
3. Enter your title in the Title field.
4. Click Browse to locate and select the file you want to submit.
5. Enter keywords in Keywords field to enable members to locate the file during a search.
6. Enter an appropriate description of the file in the Description field.
7. Click **Submit Resource**. Your submission will be reviewed by the Community Facilitator and acted upon as appropriate.

# Participating in Community Discussions

The Community Discussions panel on the Community page gives you access to ongoing discussions within the Community. These discussions are structured as follows:

- Threads are overall topics of discussion, established by Community facilitators as a way of organizing topics.
- A message or post is a comment made by an individual. A message can be the start of a thread or it can be a reply to someone else's message.

The Community Discussions panel shows

- Threads to which you have subscribed because they are of particular interest to you. You won't see this type if you haven't subscribed to any threads.
- The most active threads within the Community.

For each thread, you'll see information on the number of posts to the thread and its most recent update.

## Setting Discussion Preferences

You can set preferences to view either a single message at a time or to view an entire thread. Here's how.

1. Click the **Discussion Preferences** link on the Community Resources panel to access the Community Discussion Preferences pop-up window.
2. Click the radio button expressing your preference.
3. Click **Update**. The window closes with preference displayed when you refresh the page.

**Note:** If you update your preferences while viewing a message thread, you will need to return to **View All Threads** and re-enter the thread to view the new layout.

## Viewing All Forums

If your Community Facilitator(s) have created different threads, you can view the entire list of topics posted for the Community.

1. From the Community page, click **View All Threads**. The list displays. If you are viewing a message thread, all threads are listed in the **Threads** box on the left-hand side of the page.
2. Click a thread's link to view its messages.

## Viewing a Thread and Reading Messages

1. To view a specific discussion thread, click its Thread name as listed in the Community Discussion panel of the Community page or on the View All Threads page. The Message page displays, with the first message of the Thread at the top. Depending on your Preference setting, you will either see all the responses below that message or a list of links to the replies.
2. If your preference was "a single message at a time," click the messages in the threads below the original message to view them. Then the new message displays at the top, followed by the remaining links in the hierarchy.
3. If there are additional links below this message, you will see the list of links and a "+" character at the left of the message. This means there is more content below the link.  Note: The "+" looks like "±" because it is part of the link and is underlined.
4. To view messages above the current message, click the first linked message.

## Replying to a Message

Begin at the page with the message to which you are replying:

1. Click Reply link and add your comments. The Reply page displays.
2. Retain or change the Subject in the Subject field.
3. Enter your response in the Body field.
4. Click Post Message. Your reply posts after the previous reply to or under the original message.

**Note:** Your message position may be at the bottom of the screen if there are many responses to the original message.

 

## Viewing the Full Thread

To read a full thread, including Title and Body text:

1. From the Message page, click the **View Full Thread** link found in the **Thread Options** box in the upper-left corner of the page. The page displays.

## Creating a New Thread

To create a discussion thread (that is to create a new topic to which other members of the community can reply):

1. From the Community page or at any Message page, click the **Create a New Thread** tab at the top of the page. The Create a New Thread displays.
2. Enter the Subject of your new thread in the subject field.
3. Enter the body of your message.
4. Click Post Message. Your new thread is added to the list of threads displayed for the Community.

## Editing Your Message

As the creator of a thread, you can edit your own message to correct typographical errors, grammar, spelling, or to rephrase your thoughts. Do **not** edit the message after others have responded, since this may cause confusion.

## Subscribing to a Thread

To subscribe to a thread:

1. From any Message page, click the **Subscribe to Thread** link found in the **Thread Options** box in the upper-left corner of the page. When you go back to the community home page, the thread will appear in the Community Discussions panel under the Subscribed Threads heading.

## Unsubscribing to a Thread

1. Go to the Thread to which you want to unsubscribe.
2. Click the **Change Thread Subscription** link found in the **Thread Options** box in the upper-left corner of the page.
3. Unclick the Subscribe box.
4. Click **Update Subscription**. The thread will be removed from the Community Discussions area on the Community Home Page.
5. Click the Community Home link tab at the top of the page to return to the Community Home Page.

## Printing a Thread

You can change the formatting of the thread display for printing, showing only the content of each message in the thread.

1. From the Message page for the thread, click **Printer-Friendly Format**. The converted page displays and is automatically sent to your printer.

# Working with CoP Messaging

SLA's Communities of Practice internal messaging system lets you send messages to other SLA members. This feature facilitates your professional communication and preserves your privacy, since Internet e-mail addresses aren't necessary within the system. The instructions below explain how to use the various features of the system.

Note: You can't communicate with non-members using this system. To contact non-members, use your standard email. SLA's internal messaging functionality is similar to standard email.

## Setting Messaging Preferences

Messaging Preferences allow you to indicate whether or not you want to receive a new Community message notification sent to your Internet email address as entered in your Profile and to design an "Out of Office" message. To set your messaging preferences, you need to be in the Messaging Center. This page is reached from the CoP home page or your Personal Page by clicking the **Mailbox** icon. From the **Inbox Folder**, click the **Mail Preferences** tab found at the top of the page. The Message Preference window opens.

### Sending Notification of New CoP Messages To Your External E-mail Address

1. Select either the "Yes" or the "No" radio button to determine if you wish to be sent notification to your external Internet email that you have received new messages in your CoP mail account.
2. Click **Update** to save your choice. The window closes.

## Setting an "Out Of Office" Notice

To set your CoP Messaging to automatically reply with an "Out Of Office" response:

1. In any email window, click the **Messaging Preferences** top found at the top of the page. The Messaging Preferences window displays.
2. For the Out of Office option, click Yes.
3. Type the desired reply message to be automatically sent.
4. Click **Update** to save your message.

 

# Reading Messages

When you have new messages waiting, a little red number appears under your mailbox icon at the top of your personal page or CoP pages. That number indicates how many unread messages are in your inbox.

## Reading Messages

1. To access your messages, click the **Mailbox** icon on the top navigation bar of your personal page or any CoP page. A red number indicates how unread messages you have.
2. Click the message's subject line to open the message.
3. When you access the message, buttons at the bottom of the message permit you to reply to, forward, delete, or move the message:
   a. To reply, click **Reply** or **Reply All**. (See Replying to a Message.)
   b. To forward the message, click **Forward**. (See Forwarding a Message.)
   c. To delete the message, click **Delete**. (See  Deleting a Message.)
   d. To move the message to a folder, click **Move**. (See Saving Messages in Folders.)
4. To return to your inbox, click Inbox.

## Reading Messages in Folders

1. Click the **Mailbox** icon on the top navigation bar of your personal page or any CoP page. The screen displays your messages window with your Inbox selected.
2. Click the name of the folder containing messages you wish to access.
3. Click the message's subject line to read the full message.
4. When you access the message, buttons at the bottom of the message permit you to reply to, forward, delete, or move the message:
   a. To reply, click **Reply** or **Reply All**. (See Replying to a Message.)
   b. To forward the message, click **Forward**. (See Forwarding a Message.)
   c. To delete the message, click **Delete**. (See Deleting a Message.)
   d. To move the message to a folder, click **Move**. (See Saving Messages in Folders.)
5. Click the folder link to return to the folder you have been viewing.

## Viewing/Saving Attachments

Messages containing attachments are marked with a small paper clip in the Inbox. To access attachments:

1. Open your message.
2. Either:
   a. Left-click the attachment name. The attachment will open in a new window.
   b. Right-click the attachment name, then save the attachment per your browser instructions.
3. Click Inbox to return to your Inbox.

## Replying to a Message

With the message open:

1. To reply to the original sender of a message, click **Reply**.  To reply to all recipients of the message, click **Reply All**. The Compose window opens.
2. The address of the sender is automatically entered. If you want to include others in your reply:
   a. To add additional SLA recipients not stored in your personal address book, click **Search**. (See Selecting Recipients from the SLA Database.)
   b. To add SLA recipients stored in your personal address book, click your **Address Book**. (See Adding Recipients from your Address Book.)
   c. To select from an already-created distribution list (group), click List. (See Recipients from a Distribution List.) The compose window reopens with the name(s) you have added.  Note: To remove a name, click the X icon preceding the name.
3. Click into the message box and enter your reply.
4. Click **Send Message**. The sent message is stored in your Sent Mail folder.

## Forwarding a Message

With your message open:

1. Click **Forward**. The Compose window opens, with "FW:" added to the subject field and Forwarded Message added to the Message Body field.
2. Choose from one or more of the following:
    a. To forward to SLA recipients not saved in your personal address book, click **Search**. (See Selecting Recipients from the SLA Database.)
    b. To forward to additional recipients saved in your personal address book, click **Address Book**. (See Adding Recipients from your Address Book.)
    c. To select from an already-created distribution list (group), click List. (See Recipients from a Distribution List.) The compose window reopens with the name(s) you have added. Note: To remove a name, click the X icon preceding the name.
3. Click **Send Message**. This action forwards the message and stores a copy in your Sent Mail folder.

## Composing New Messages

1. Click **Create Message** tab found at the top of the page to open the Compose window.
2. Add recipients:
    a. To add recipients from the SLA database, click on **Search**. (See Selecting Recipients from the SLA Database.)
    b. To add addresses from your personal Address Book, click on **Address Book**. (See Adding Recipients from your Address Book.)
    c. To select from an already-created distribution list (group), click List. (See Recipients from a Distribution List.) The compose window reopens with the name(s) you have added. Note: To remove a name, click the X icon preceding the name.
3. Click in or tab to the Subject field, then type a title for your message.
4. To add an attachment, click **Add Attachment**. (See Adding Attachments to Messages.)
5. Click in or tab to the Message Body field to enter your message content.
6. Click **Send Message**. This action sends the message and stores a copy in your Sent folder.

## Adding Attachments to Messages

As with standard email, you can attach a file to your message.

1. Click **Create Message** tab found at the top of the page to open the Compose window.
2. Click the **Upload** link on the Attachment link. The Add Attachment window opens.
3. Use the **Browse** button to navigate to the file on your computer or network.
4. Enter a brief description to let the recipient what you have attached.
5. Click **Add Attachment**. The window closes.
6. When you've finished composing and addressing your message, click **Send Message**.

## Addressing Messages

You may use one of several options to address your messages:

### Selecting Recipients from the SLA Database

To select recipients from the full SLA member database:

1. Click **Create Message** tab found at the top of the page to open the Compose window.
2. Click Search.
3. Enter appropriate keyword information to conduct your search. **Note:** You can select all SLA members in a given state or city by completing only those fields.
4. Click Search. A list of members matching your search criteria displays.
5. To add a single recipient, click a name to select it.
6. To add multiple recipient, click on the checkbox next to each of the intended recipients names and then click on the **Select Users** button. The compose window displays with those name(s) listed under the To header. **Note:** Click the X icon preceding a recipient's name to delete it.

 

7. Continue to add recipients to the TO, CC, and BCC fields as appropriate. There's no limit to the number of recipients you can add.

#### Adding Recipients from your Address Book

Your Address Book should include SLA members whom you contact frequently. Entering names here allows you to quickly include them as recipients compared to performing a search of the full SLA database. To learn how to add names to your address book, see *Adding Names to Your Address Book*.

1. Click **Create Message** tab found at the top of the page to open the Compose window.
2. Click Address Book on the To, CC, or BCC lines as appropriate.
3. To add a single recipient from your address book, click a name to select it.
4. To add multiple recipients from your address box, click on the checkbox next to each of the intended recipients names and then click on the **Select Users** button.
5. The screen returns to the compose window with the name(s) you have selected now listed under the To header. Note: Click the X icon preceding a recipient's name to delete it.

#### Adding Recipients from a Distribution List

A Distribution List is a pre-assembled group of SLA member addresses to which you send messages with a single click. To learn how to create distribution lists, see Creating Distribution Lists.

1. Open the Compose window.
2. Either:
    a. Click the name of the list that appears in your Address Book box under Lists; or
    b. Click List I in the address line, then click the desired list name.
3. The Compose window reopens with the names of the list members appearing under the To column. **Note:** Click the X icon preceding a recipient's name to remove it.
4. Repeat Steps 2-3 wish to include additional Distribution Lists.

### Adding Names to your Address Book

If you e-mail certain members often, you can save time by adding them to your Address Book.

1. Click **Add** in the Address Book panel. The Add To Address Book window displays.
2. Search for the name by entering as much relevant information as you have. **Note:** You can select all SLA members in a given state or city by completing only those fields.
3. Click **Search**. A list of members matching your search criteria displays.
4. To add a single recipient to your address book, click a name to select it. Your address book displays with it added.
5. To add multiple recipients to your address box, click on the checkbox next to each of the intended recipients names and then click on the **Select Users** button. Your address book displays with it added.

### Removing Names from your Address Book

To remove a name(s) from your Address Book:

1. Click **Edit** found in the header of your Address Book.
2. Click Remove next to the name you want to delete. The screen refreshes with the name deleted.

### Creating Distribution Lists

If you send frequently messages to the same group of individuals, you can create a distribution list to save yourself time.

1. Begin at any mail screen or at the Inbox screen.
2. Click the **Edit** link in the Address Book header. The Address Book window opens.
3. Click the **New List** tab found at the top of the page. The Create List window opens.
4. Enter a name for your list, then click the **Create List** button. The Address Book window opens, displaying the new list at the bottom.

5. Click **Add Person to List** to add names. (See Selecting Recipients from the SLA Database.) The screen refreshes after each new name you add. Note: Click the X icon preceding recipient's name to remove it.
6. Your list is automatically saved

## Renaming a Distribution List

1. Click the **Edit** link in the Address Book header. The Address Book window opens.
2. Click **Rename** to the right of the distribution list you want to rename. The Edit List window displays.
3. Enter the new list name.
4. Click **Edit List**. The new name is saved and the Address Book window displays.

## Deleting a Distribution List

1. Click the **Edit** link in the Address Book header. The Address Book window opens.
2. Click **Delete** to the right of the distribution list you want to delete. The list is deleted and the Address Book window displays.

## Deleting a Message

As with standard email, deleting a message moves it to your Delete folder. We recommend keeping messages in your Trash for 30 days. SLA administrators will periodically delete messages from your Delete folder.

### Deleting a Message from the Read Message Page

1. Select the message by clicking on the subject line.
2. Click the **Delete** button at the bottom of the message. This moves the message to the Delete folder.

### Deleting from your Inbox or Folders

1. Begin at your Inbox or any folder.
2. Click to place a check mark in the Select column for the message(s) you want to delete.
3. Click Delete. This moves the message to your Delete folder. **Note:** Messages are stored in your Delete folder for 30, 60, or 90 days depending on administrator settings and are then permanently deleted from the system.

### Undeleting Messages

1. Open the Delete folder.
2. Click to place a check mark in front of the message(s) you want to undelete. **Note:** Use Select All button to delete all your messages at once. Or you can singly "unclick" the messages you want to keep.
3. Click **Undelete**. This moves the message(s) to your Inbox folder.

## Saving Messages in Folders

You may want to organize your messages in folders by topic or other categories. Here are two methods to create folders and move messages into them.

### With the message on screen

1. Have your message on screen.
2. Click the down arrow in the **Move To** drop-down list box and select the folder destination.
3. Click **Move**. This moves the message to the selected destination folder.

### With the inbox or another folder on screen

1. Click the check box next to each message you would like to move into another folder.
2. Click the down arrow in the **Move To** drop-down list box and select the folder destination.
3. Click **Move**. This moves the message to the selected destination folder.

## Creating Folders

To create folders to help you organize your messages:

1. From any email screen, click **New** in the Folders panel. The Add Folder window displays.
2. Enter the new folder name in the Name field.
3. Click **Create Folder**. This adds the new folder to the list.

## Renaming Folders

1. From any email screen, click **Edit** in the Folders panel. The Folders window displays.
2. Click **Rename** next to the folder you want to rename. The Edit Folder window displays.
3. Enter the new name of the folder in the Name field.  Note: You cannot rename the Inbox, Sent or Delete folders.
4. Click **Edit Folder**. This renames the folder and returns you to the Folders window.

## Deleting Folders

CAUTION: Deleting a folder permanently deletes all e-mail messages stored in the folder.

1. From any email screen, click **Edit** in the Folders panel. The Folders window displays.
2. Click Delete next to the folder you want to delete. The Edit Folder window displays. This deletes the folder and returns you to the Folders window. Note: You cannot delete the Inbox, Sent or Delete folders.

# Member Search

It's easy to learn about other members with similar interests, in similar geographic locations or in the same unit membership as you--people who can assist you, and who you can assist in turn.

You can easily send CoP e-mail messages directly from your mail search results, so that you can invite other members to join a new Community or ask whether they would like to start a new Community with you.

The procedures described below will help you search for and contact SLA members. Begin at your Personal Page or any CoP Community page. Note: Make sure your SLA profile is kept up to date so that the search results provided continue to provide accurate information about you.

1. Click the Member Search icon.
    a. To locate a specific individual, enter as much information as you have into the fields at the top of the page.
    b. To locate individuals by their unit of membership, select an item from the list box, then click Add to move it to the right-side panel. You may select as many units of membership as you like.
2. Click Search for Members. Your search results display. If you are not satisfied with the search results or wish to conduct an additional search, click Search Again. If a significant number of search results are returned, you will be presented with a result count and asked if you would like to proceed or return to the previous page to revise your search criteria.
3. To send an e-mail message to individual members listed in your search results, click the checkbox next to their name. To select all members found in your search, click the **Check All** button towards the top of the result list. Click **Send Message**; the messaging window opens. If you are unhappy with your results, click the **Search Again** button at the bottom of the window.
4. For the Subject Panel, click the radio button matching your message subject:
    a. Request to Join a Community
    b. Request to Start a Community
    c. Network
    d. Custom--If you select Custom, click into the text field to enter your message subject.
5. Enter the text of your message in the Message field.
6. Click Send Message. The message is sent and you are returned to your Personal Page. **Note:** if you click Cancel, you'll need to use your browser's Back button to return to the search page.

# My Profile

Your SLA member profile is used to store contact and other information you provide. The Update Profile link lets you update your member profile information. Your profile is used in the Communities of Practice so that members can identify you as an individual they'd like to work with or get to know. Note: As of the writing of this Users Guide, CoP profiles are not updated in the SLA membership database. Please let SLA know if changes need to be made to your first or last name, or e-mail account.

To verify and update your profile:

1. From your Personal Page, or from any CoP page, click the **My Profile** icon. The Edit My Profile page displays.
2. Review the information you see, or enter your first name, middle name, last name, and external email addresses in the corresponding text fields.
3. Review the information you see in the About Me text box. To enter or update information, click into the text field and enter any information you think members would find valuable to know about you (work history, job title, special areas of interest, accomplishments, personal information and so forth).
4. You can add a photo of yourself to your profile. This photo should be in .jpg or .gif format optimized for web display. Maximum file size is 40K; maximum display size is 300 pixels by 300 pixels. Recommended display size is 150 pixels wide by 180 pixels high.
    a. Click **Browse** to navigate to your photo file on your computer, then click **Open**. The file will upload.
5. When you're satisfied with your profile, click **Update**. Your Profile is saved.

 

# Join / Visit Communities

Join/Visit Communities lets you search for Communities of interest to you based on a keyword search and then lets you visit or choose to join a Community. To review all communities, use the scroll bar of your browser to view the entire list.

## Searching for Communities

1. From your Personal Page or any community home page, click the **Join / Visit Communities** icon. The Join or Visit Communities page displays.
2. Since may be are many active communities, you can narrow the list by entering keyword(s) in the **Search Unsubscribed** Communities text field, then clicking Search. The list of unsubscribed communities that meet your criteria displays.
3. You can also search for communities using the alphabetical Index.
    a. Click **View All** to see all the communities that are available. The list appears, including a link to the community, its description, the number of members, when it was last updated, and a checkbox to select to join the community.
    b. Click a letter of the alphabet to see the communities starting with that letter to which you have not subscribed. The list appears, including a link to the community, its description, the number of members, when it was last updated, and a checkbox to select to join the community. If you are already a member of a community, the Join check box will not appear.
4. You can either visit or join a community, as described below. Click **Personal Home** to exit the page.

## Visiting Other Communities

1. Using your search result list, click on the name of the community. The Community Page opens. When visiting a community, you will only be able to view information listed on the Community home page. The View All and Suggest links will not appear in any of the headers. To participate in a community you must first join that community.
2. Click your browser **Back** button to return to the Join/Visit Communities page or click on the **Join / Visit Communities** icon at the top of your screen.

## Joining Communities

1. Place a check mark in the **Join** checkbox to the right of one or more communities.
2. Click **Join Communities** at the bottom of the page. The screen displays a confirmation.
3. Click the **Personal Home** tab found at the top of the page to return to your Personal Page. The community will now be listed in your My Communities panel.

## Unsubscribing from Communities

To remove yourself from the membership of any of your communities:

1. From your Personal Page or from any Community page, click the **Unsubscribe** icon. The Unsubscribe from Communities page displays.
2. Place a check mark in the Unsubscribe checkbox to the right of any community from which you wish to unsubscribe.
3. Click **Unsubscribe**. The community(s) will no longer be listed in your My Communities panel.

## Suggesting a New Community

If you can't find the community you're looking for under the **View All** list, use this function to request that a new Community be formed.

1. Click the **Suggest a Community** icon on the Top Navigation Bar or the **Suggest a Community** link in the header of the My Communities panel. The Suggest A Community window displays.
2. Click into the fields provided to describe the Community you want to request. Try to be explicit as you describe the benefits your Community would provide to SLA members.
3. Provide one or more keywords to help potential members locate the Community in a search.
4. Answer the **Facilitator Questions**.

   **Note:** Before a new community can be created, at least one facilitator must oversee activities.

   As the person suggesting the new Community, you're the most obvious person to serve as Facilitator, or you may know someone who would like to serve. Facilitators are SLA members who volunteer to support and champion the success of a particular Community. These volunteers monitor activity within the Community, encourage member participation, and organize Community events (virtual or face-to-face). Duties of a facilitator include:

   - Starting discussions
   - Polling Community members
   - Updating content
   - Ensuring members' questions are answered
   - Coordinating member communications
   - Identifying and using experts
   - Scheduling and hosting chat sessions
   - Managing and organizing Community resources
   - Planning Community events beyond the virtual community

5. Click the down arrow of the drop-down list box and select the name of any Community to which your new community might be related.
6. Provide other relevant information that would help the SLA staff in reviewing your request in the text field below.
7. Click **Submit Suggestion**. SLA staff reviews all suggestions for appropriateness and to avoid redundant communities. You will be notified of their decision.

# CoP Central: The SLA Community

CoP Central, or the SLA Community, is the community of all SLA members. Visit to learn the latest news, find resources, and discuss issues affecting SLA as a whole. To access the SLA Community main page:

1. Click the **CoP Central** icon. The CoP Central page displays.
2. For instructions on using the features on this page, see the help provided in Community Pages.

 

# Returning to Your Personal Page

Click the **My Personal Page** icon on the Navigation Bar from any Community page to return to your Personal page.

# Getting Help

If you have questions about using this site, you can click on the site-specific Help links or click the FAQ link found at the top of all web site pages in the purple bar. If you'd like additional help or wish to report a problem, use the Virtual Help Desk.

## Virtual Help Desk Log On

1. To log on:
   - If you are already registered for help desk access, enter you user name and password in the fields, then click **Logon**.
   - If you have forgotten your password, click **E-mail My Password**. It will be sent to you.

## Creating a New Help Desk Username and Password

1. If you are new to the Help Desk click **New User**. The Registration for New Users screen appears, shown below.
2. Fill in the fields as requested. You may omit the phone number and location fields. Click **Submit**.
3. You will receive a confimation notice that an account has been created. Now you can log on using the link at the bottom of the message.

## To Edit Your Information

1. Clicking **Edit Information** takes you to the Update Information screen. Here you can edit the information you entered as a New User and change your password.
2. Click **Submit** to complete your updates.

## The SLA Virtual Help Menu

The SLA Virtual Help Desk Menu offers you the options of submitting a problem, searching the knowledge base, and updating your Help Desk profile. (If you have already submitted a problem and it's been assigned a number, you can enter the number in the text field to the left of the Open specific ID button or the Lookup by ID button.)

### Submitting a New Problem

1. You may wish to click **View Problem List** and read the problems and solutions, so that you don't submit a duplicate issue.
2. Once you've determined that your issue is new, click **Submit New Problem**. The Submit a New Problem displays.
3. If you have created a login, your contact information automatically populates. If not, fill in the fields as appropriate.
4. Use the drop-down list boxes to the right to classify your problem. Select the appropriate **Department** (for example, Technology Services) from its drop-down listbox. Then select the appropriate problem category (for example, E-mail issues) from its drop-down listbox, shown below.
5. Key in a short description of your topic/problem in the **Title** field.
6. Use the **Message** field to provide details of your topic or problem.
7. Click **Submit Problem** to send your problem to the Help Desk. To start over, click **Clear Form**.

### Search the Knowledge Base

1. From your Personal Page or any Community page, click the **Help** icon. The SLA Virtual Help login screen displays.
2. Click **Search the Knowledge Base**. The Knowledge Base screen displays, shown below.
3. Enter a keyword which describes the subject you wish to learn more about.
4. Click on or off the Title, Description, and Solution checkboxes depending upon where you want to search.
5. Click **Search**. Any problem and solution which fit your search will display.
6. Click the title of the item (for example to read the problem and solution).
7. Either click **Menu** to reach the problem submission menu or click **Log Off** to exit the Virtual Help Desk.