



Master Syndication Gateway V2

User's Manual

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Introduction

This document is formatted for letter size printer paper. A version formatted for A4 size printer paper is available at <http://willmaster.com/master/gateway1/support/>

If Master Syndication Gateway V2 is not yet installed, see the Master-Syndication-Gateway-V2-Installation.html installation manual for instructions.

Copies of this document, the installation manual, and other documentation and information of interest can be found at <http://willmaster.com/master/gateway1/support/>

Welcome to Master Syndication Gateway V2!

We tried to make the software intuitive to use. We also acknowledge that the experience as a user has different perspectives than the experience as a software and documentation writer.

Therefore, if you have any questions at all see <http://willmaster.com/master/gateway1/support/> or use the “Contact” link available at our various web sites (some of which are listed at the end of this document).

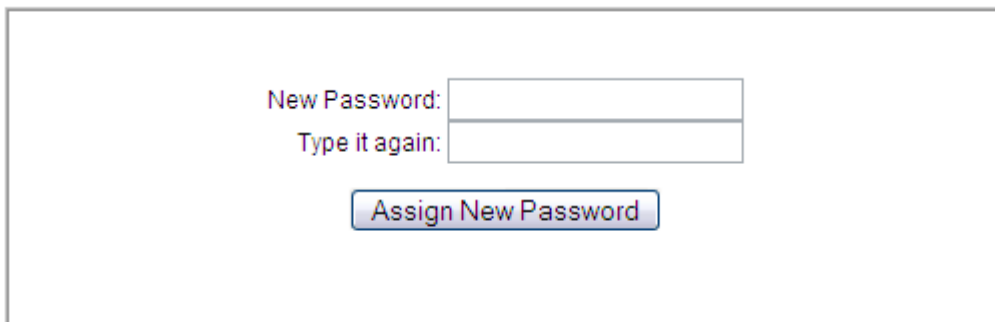
Control Panel

The control panel program file name is MSGcp.cgi

To access your control panel, type the URL of MSGcp.cgi into your browser. Example:

`http://example.com/cgi-bin/syndication/MSGcp.cgi`

When you first access your control panel, you will be asked to provide a password. What you type here will be your password for future access.



The image shows a web form for assigning a new password. It consists of two text input fields. The first field is labeled "New Password:" and the second field is labeled "Type it again:". Below these fields is a button labeled "Assign New Password".

On subsequent launching of the control panel, the normal password access page will be displayed instead of the above.

The normal password access page contains instructions about what to do if you lose or wish to change the control panel password.

Password:

Lost Password?

In the directory where the Master Syndication Gateway V2 programs are installed is a subdirectory named `MSGdata` which has another subdirectory named `p` with one file in it. That file is `p.cgi`

Delete file `p.cgi`

When file `p.cgi` is deleted, the next time you use your control panel it will ask you to assign a new password.

Getting Started With Master Syndication Gateway V2

After the password screen, the main page will have two or more buttons. When Master Syndication Gateway V2 is first installed, only the "Basic Configuration" and "Create a New Channel" buttons will be available.



Do "Basic Configuration" first. Then do "Create a New Channel."

After you have created a channel, the rest of the buttons will show up, and you'll see a dropdown list on the main control panel page from which a channel can be selected to associate with the rest of the buttons.

Basic Configuration

The basic configuration page might have been initialized when the installation was done. If not, it needs to be done first.

When the "Basic Configuration" button is clicked, you'll see a form on the next page asking for the following information:

Program URLs and Directory: Specify the control panel URL, the main Master Syndication Gateway V2 program URL, and the server directory path to where the program is installed.

Program URLs and Directory:

Specify the complete http://... URL to this control panel program (should be the URL currently in your browser's address bar):

Specify the complete http://... URL of the main Master Syndication Gateway V2 program (program file name will be MSG.cgi unless you changed the name):

Specify the complete server directory path to where the Master Syndication Gateway V2 program is located:

If you're unsure about the directory path, the "environment variables" menu item of the [Master Pre-Installation Tester](#) program can be used. It's free to download and use.

If you install and run the [Master Pre-Installation Tester](#) program in the same directory where Master Syndication Gateway V2 is installed, the script directory path as reported by the "environment variables" menu item is also the server directory path to where Master Syndication Gateway V2 is installed.

Nonexistent Content: Specify what to display if a non-existent channel is requested.

Nonexistent Content:

Specify the content to be displayed when receiving a request for a channel that does not exist.

Check box to automatically insert HTML paragraph tags for blocks of text separated with one or more blank lines.

```
<h1>Sorry, an invalid channel was specified.</h1>
```

Unauthorized Content: Specify what to display if an unauthorized or banned domain tries to display your syndicated content.

Unauthorized Content:

Specify the message to be displayed if an unauthorized or banned domain tries to display syndicated content.

- Check box to automatically insert HTML paragraph tags for blocks of text separated with one or more blank lines.

```
<h1>Sorry, this domain is not authorized to  
publish the requested content.</h1>
```

Failed Authentication URL: If Master Syndication Gateway V2 can't immediately verify that a domain is authorized to display the requested content (some browsers don't provide the necessary information with the request), then the content is sent to the domain. Once the content arrives, a JavaScript function does the verification.

If the JavaScript function discovers the domain is unauthorized or banned, then the browser is redirected to the URL you specify here.

Failed Authentication URL:

If Master Syndication Gateway V2 can't immediately verify that a domain is authorized to display the requested content (some browsers don't provide that information with the request), then the content is sent to the domain.

Once the content arrives, a JavaScript function does the verification. If the JavaScript function discovers the domain is unauthorized or banned, then the browser is redirected to the URL you specify here:

Update the configuration information.

[Update Basic Configuration Settings](#)

Create a New Channel

Before content can be syndicated, at least one channel must be available within which to publish the content. There is no practical limit to the number of channels that may be created.

When the "Create a New Channel" button is clicked, you'll see a form on another page asking for the following information:

Name: Type a one-line name or description for your ready identification of the channel.

Name:

Specify a name for your new channel, something that will be a recognizable label for you.

Channel Name:

Permission: Select either "Open" or "Restricted"

Permission:

Specify which procedure will determine who has permission to syndicate this channel. (See the Master Syndication Gateway V2 manual for a discussion regarding effectiveness of the banned and authorized domain name lists.)

Open —
Every internet domain may carry this channel except those named in the list of banned domains.

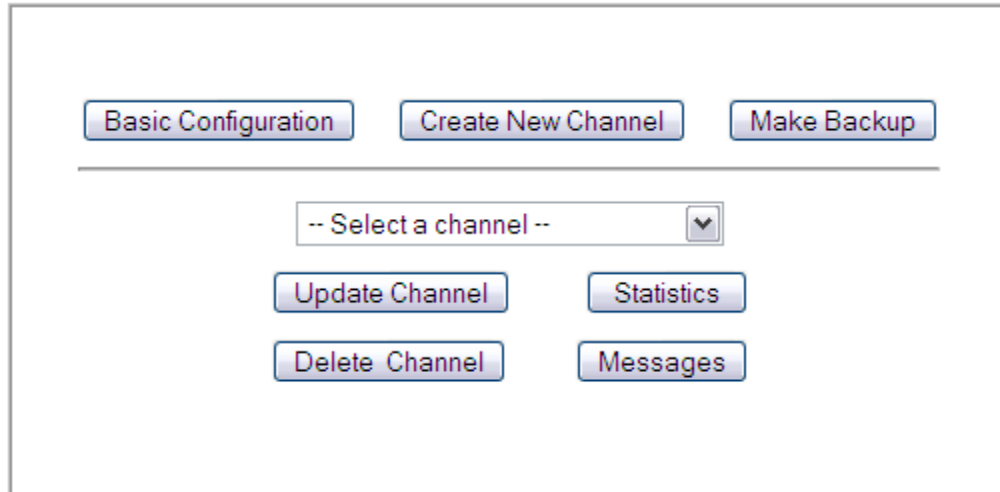
Restricted —
Only internet domains on the authorized list may carry this channel.

Open – Every Internet domain may carry this channel except those named on the channel's list of banned domains.

Restricted – Only Internet domains on the channel's list of authorized domains may carry this channel.

Now, click the "Create Channel" button to store the newly created channel. (You can upload content and put domain names on your banned or authorized list after the channel has been created.)

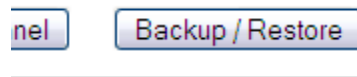
When one or more channels have been created, the Main Page of the control panel will look something like this:



Make Backup

Click the Make Backup button to make a backup of your work up to this point.

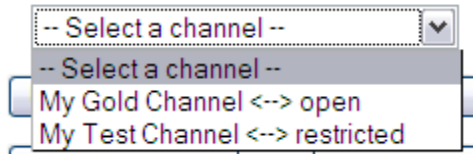
After the Make Backup button has been clicked, the button's text will change to "Backup / Restore."



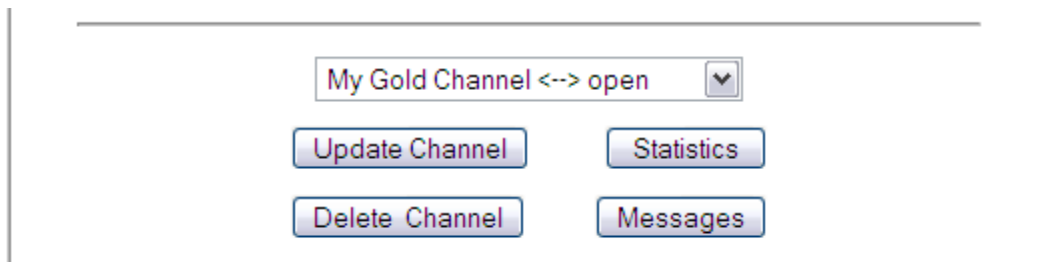
The "Backup / Restore." button leads to a page where you can make additional backups, restore previously backed up information, and cause old backup files to be deleted from the server.

Update Channel

As with all of the buttons below the dropdown list, a channel must be selected from the list for the buttons to relate to



When a channel is selected, then the buttons below the dropdown list will have a reference.



When the "Update Channel" button is clicked, you'll see a form on another page asking for certain information.

Updating Channel

This section presents some basic identification of the channel you are updating. Once you have hundreds of channels, this can serve as a valuable confirmation that you are updating the channel you intended to update

Updating channel — **My Gold Channel**:

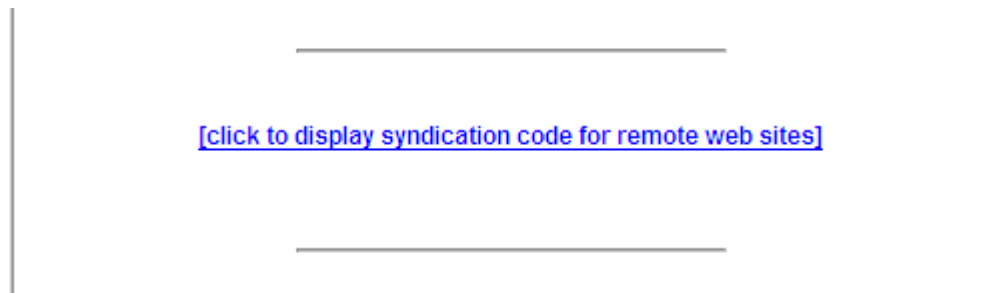
Name: **My Gold Channel**

Permission: **Open** — Every internet domain may carry this channel except those named in the list of banned domains.

Syndication Code for Remote Web Sites

Clicking the

“[\[click to display syndication code for remote web sites\]](#)” link on the control panel will cause a section of the web page to open up. The section contains syndication code for web sites to paste into their web pages where your syndicated content will automatically be displayed.




When clicked, one block of JavaScript code and two blocks of PDF code are displayed.

The JavaScript code can be used whether or not the remote syndicating web site has PHP enabled.

JavaScript:

Here is the JavaScript code to paste into syndication site web pages when using the JavaScript syndication method.

```
<script src="http://example.com/cgi-bin/msg/MSG.cgi?aaa" type="text/javascript">
</script>
```

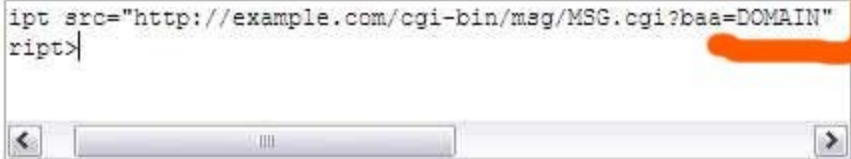


If the channel is a closed channel, the word DOMAIN must be replaced by the domain name where the content will be published. DOMAIN is the domain name only, not the http:// or www. parts.

JavaScript:

Here is the JavaScript code to paste into syndication site web pages when using the JavaScript syndication method. **Replace DOMAIN (first or second line of the code) with the domain name of the syndication site.** (DOMAIN is name only, no http:// or www.)

```
ipt src="http://example.com/cgi-bin/msg/MSG.cgi?baa=DOMAIN" type="text/javascript">
ript>
```



The code for the first PHP method is probably the easiest. It's only 3 lines, and it doesn't require PHP processing other than just retrieving the file. The drawback is that this code might not work on all PHP-enabled sites, it depends on how PHP is configured.

Here is the code for the first PHP method.

```
Here is the first method.  
  
<?php  
@readfile('http://example.com/cgi-bin/msg/MSG.cgi?PHP2&aaa')  
?>
```

If the channel is a closed channel, the word DOMAIN must be replaced by the domain name where the content will be published. DOMAIN is the domain name only, not the http:// or www. parts.

```
Here is the first method. Replace DOMAIN (first or second line of the code)  
with the domain name of the syndication site. (DOMAIN is name only, no  
http:// or www.)  
  
le('http://example.com/cgi-bin/msg/MSG.cgi?PHP2&baa=DOMAIN')
```

The code for the second PHP syndication method is a big block of code. (The syndication URL is on the second line.) This code, however, should work for all PHP-enabled sites.

Here is the second method.

```
<?php
$url = 'http://example.com/cgi-bin/msg/MSG.cgi?PHP2&aaa';
function GetContentFromScript($url)
{
    if(strpos($url,'/') == 0) { $url = 'http://'.$_SERVER[
    $tpos = strpos($url,'://');
    if($tpos > 0) { $url = substr($url,$tpos+strlen('://'));
    $uri = '/';
    $host = $url;
    $tpos = strpos($url,'/');
    if($tpos > 2)
    {
        $host = substr($url,0,$tpos);
```

If the channel is a closed channel, the word DOMAIN must be replaced by the domain name where the content will be published. DOMAIN is the domain name only, not the http:// or www. parts.

Here is the second method. Replace DOMAIN (first or second line of the code) with the domain name of the syndication site. (DOMAIN is name only, no http:// or www.)

```
'http://example.com/cgi-bin/msg/MSG.cgi?PHP2&baa=DOMAIN';
n GetContentFromScript($url)

t strpos($url,'/') == 0) { $url = 'http://'.$_SERVER['SERVER
s = strpos($url,'://');
t tpos > 0) { $url = substr($url,$tpos+strlen('://')); }
= '/';
t t = $url;
s s = strpos($url,'/');
t tpos > 2)

host = substr($url,0,$tpos);
```

The code for the third PHP syndication method contains 3 lines and can be used on web sites that have PHP enabled **when PHP code in the syndicated content needs to be executed at the remote syndication site**. Note that this, like the first method, may not work on all PHP-enabled sites. It depends on how PHP is configured.

And here is the third method.

```
<?php
@include_once('http://example.com/cgi-bin/msg/MSG.cgi?PHP2&a
?>
```

A screenshot of a code editor window. The text above the editor reads "And here is the third method." The editor contains three lines of PHP code: <?php, @include_once('http://example.com/cgi-bin/msg/MSG.cgi?PHP2&a, and ?>. The editor has a scrollbar at the bottom.

If the channel is a closed channel, the word DOMAIN must be replaced by the domain name where the content will be published. DOMAIN is the domain name only, not the http:// or www. parts.

And here is the third method. Replace DOMAIN (first or second line of the code) with the domain name of the syndication site. (DOMAIN is name only, no http:// or www.)

```
e('http://example.com/cgi-bin/msg/MSG.cgi?PHP2&baa=DOMAIN');
```

A screenshot of a code editor window. The text above the editor reads "And here is the third method. Replace DOMAIN (first or second line of the code) with the domain name of the syndication site. (DOMAIN is name only, no http:// or www.)". The editor contains one line of PHP code: e('http://example.com/cgi-bin/msg/MSG.cgi?PHP2&baa=DOMAIN');. The word "DOMAIN" is highlighted with a red hand-drawn box. The editor has a scrollbar at the bottom.

Banned/Authorized Domains

Whether you see a banned domains or authorized domains textarea box on this control panel page depends on whether the channel's permissions are "open" or "restricted," respectively.

Banned Domains

If your channel's permission is "open" – List the domain names you want banned from showing this channel's content.

Banned Domains:

List the domains banned from syndicating this channel.

Authorized Domains

If your channel's permission is "restricted" – List the domain names that are authorized to show this channel's content.

Authorized Domains:
List the domains authorized to syndicate this channel.

If you do not wish to publish or edit content at this time, skip the "Channel Content" section and click the "Update Channel" button.

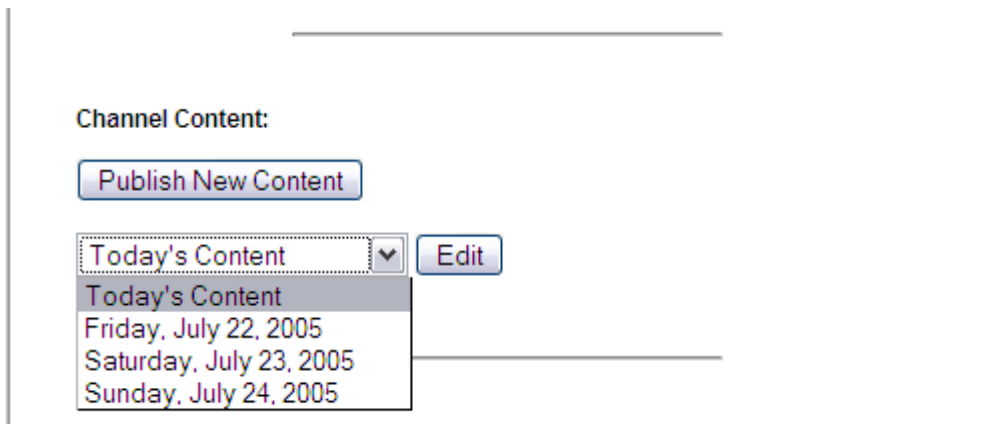
Otherwise, use the "Channel Content" section (which will automatically save changes made on this page).

Channel Content

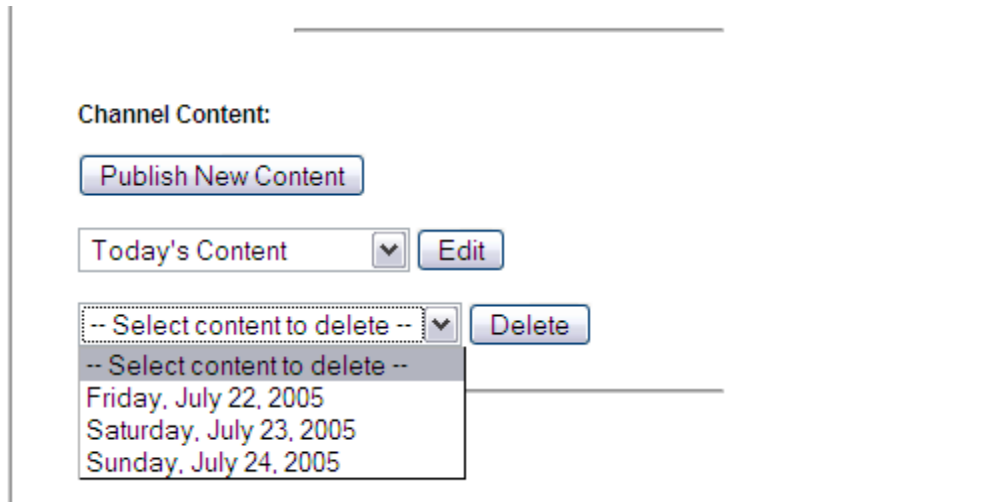
When the channel is new, before any content has been published, you will see only one button, "Publish New Content."



After publishing one or more channels, an edit option becomes available for the current (today's) content and any content for the channel that has been scheduled for syndication in the future.



When publishing content for syndication on a date in the future, a delete option becomes available.



The delete option is not allowed to delete the current day's content.

The “Publish Content” Control Panel Page

The “Publish content” control panel page contains checkboxes for certain rudimentary HTML conversions, a textarea box for the content (which can contain the content itself or a URL or directory location of the content), the date the content shall go live, and whether or not this content shall overwrite any content previously specified for the same day on this channel.

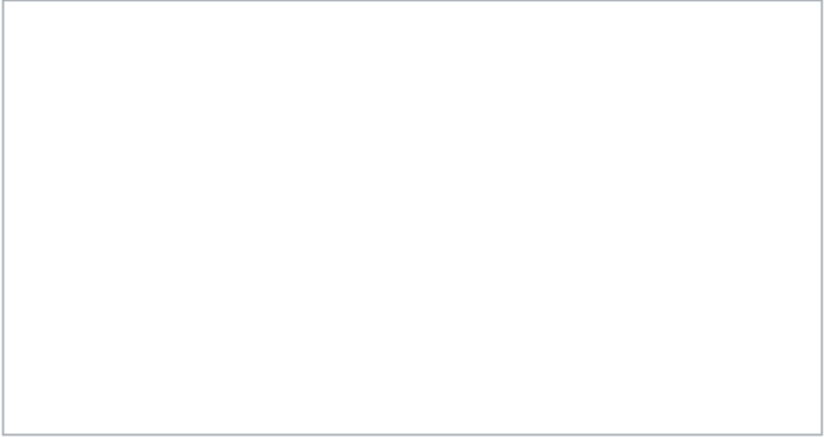
HTML Conversion

Certain rudimentary HTML conversions can be specified.

- Insert HTML paragraph tags for blocks of text separated with one or more blank lines.
- Convert [http://](#) and [https://](#) URLs into clickable URLs.
- Make [mailto:](#) email addresses clickable.
- Convert anything that appears to be a valid email address into a clickable address.

Check the box of any HTML conversions to apply to the syndicated content. The checks apply whether URL to the content, server location of the content, or the content itself is in the textarea box.

Textarea Box for the Content



If more than one line of content is in this box, the content is assumed to be for syndication. (Note: A maximum of 32k of content can be processed by web page forms.)

If only one line of content is in the box, assumptions are made this way:

1. If the line begins with "http://" it is assumed to be a URL to the content.
2. Else, if the line begins with a "/", or contains a "/" with a letter or number on both sides of the "/", or is composed of one word with at least one period/dot embedded and no other punctuation characters, then it is assumed to be a server directory location to the content.

3. Otherwise, the line itself is assumed to be the content for syndication.

If a URL or server directory location is assumed and the content can not be retrieved for whatever reason, the phrase “Unable to retrieve content” between H5 tags is syndicated.

The Date the Content Shall Go Live

Here, specify either the current date or, if the content is to be syndicated sometime in the future, the date the syndication shall go live.

This content is to be live starting on:

Day: Month: Year:

Whether or Not To Overwrite

If content for the above starting date already exists, shall it be overwritten?

Yes No

Save the content to update the channel.

Note – JavaScript is Automatically Inserted Into Content

When content is syndicated, some JavaScript code is appended. The JavaScript is to accommodate browsers that don't provide the URL of the requesting web page – it verifies that the domain is not banned (for permission "open" channels) or that the domain is on your authorized list (for permission "restricted" channels).

If you want the JavaScript to be located somewhere other than at the end of the syndicated content, put the placeholder

```
[[JS_CODE_HERE]]
```

into your content at the point where the JavaScript is to be inserted.

If you want to prevent the JavaScript code from being included in your content, put

```
[[NO_JS_CODE]]
```

anywhere in your content.

If `[[JS_CODE_HERE]]` is found in your syndicating content, the program will ignore and delete any `[[NO_JS_CODE]]` that may be present. In other words, if both mutually-excluding placeholders are found in your content, `[[JS_CODE_HERE]]` prevails.

Delete Channel

When a channel is selected in the dropdown list of the Main Page of the control panel, then the channel can be deleted with the “Delete Channel” button.



When the “Delete Channel” button is clicked, you'll have one opportunity to change your mind:

Note:

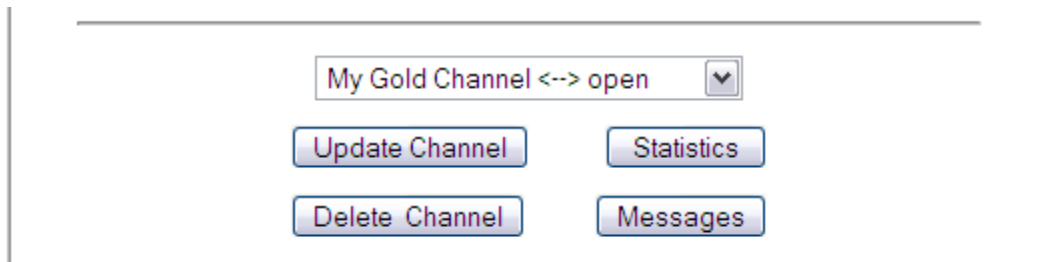
You are about to delete the following channel, including any content and domain name lists associated with it, and remove the channel's availability from all remote syndication sites.

Name: **My Test Channel**

Permission: **Restricted** — Only internet domains on the Authorized Domain list may carry this channel.

Statistics

When a channel is selected in the dropdown list of the Main Page of the control panel, statistics about that channel can be obtained.



The statistics are a record of the dates and number of times channel content has been requested, the requesting URLs as browsers provide it, and the syndication site domain names if the channel's permission is "restricted."

View Statistics

Provide the dates you want to start and end the statistics compilation and click either "Totals Graphed" or "Daily Table."

"Totals Graphed" provides totals with bar graph for each requesting page URL.

“Daily Table” provides a table with columns for every day within the selected date range. The columns will have the total for the day for each requesting page URL.

Downloading and Importing Statistics

This provides some information on where to find the statistics data file for this channel and its format.

Delete Statistics

Provide start and end dates of the statistics you want to delete. The deletion is instant; there is no request for confirmation!

Messages

When a channel is selected in the dropdown list of the Main Page of the control panel, then messages concerning that channel can be viewed.



The "Messages" button takes you to a page with the current message log printed at the bottom. At the top of the page is a list of things you can do with the messages, including printing, saving, downloading, and deleting (deletion is instant; there is no request for confirmation!).

Creating Content for Syndication

Master Syndication Gateway V2 will publish plain text just as happily as sophisticated HTML and JavaScript.

When you syndicate content, you're (usually) supplying only part of a remote site's web page. Therefore, your content should not contain tags such as HEAD, TITLE, META, or BODY.

A List of Things You Can Include in Your Syndicated Content

Any standard HTML tags that would normally go into the BODY section of a web page. This includes –

Sounds

Images

Forms

Tables

Plain text

Links

JavaScript

CSS

Hit counters

Pretty much anything that can be put into a normal web page.

All URLs in your content (including HREF=..., SRC=..., and ACTION=... URLs) must be absolute http://... URLs. This is because

your content will be on remote servers, and those servers would be unable to correctly resolve relative URLs.

If you use forms or other links to CGI programs, make sure those programs allow input from domains other than your own.

Two Things That Should Not Be in Syndicated Content

Flash and other technology that requires the syndicating site's server to run specific software. If you know that your syndicating sites are on compatible servers, then go ahead and include the technology. But if you don't know, it is best not to include it.

JavaScript cookie code. It's not that you can't set cookies, but the cookie would be set for the syndicating site's domain name – the domain where the content is being viewed – and not for your domain name.

One Thing That Can Not Be Included in Your Syndicated Content

Server Side Includes. SSI can only include files and launch programs that are on the same server as the web page; SSI tags on syndicating site's servers can't reach your server.

As you can see, there are few restrictions. Just about anything goes so long as you remember that everything your content requires

must be included in the content itself. External JavaScript and CSS files need to be linked with absolute http://... URLs.

Things to Consider

If you're pasting the content into the control panels textarea box for the content (in lieu of a URL or server location to retrieve the content), keep your content under 32k in size. Most browsers have a 32k limit for the amount of text they can submit with a form. Thus, Master Syndication Gateway V2's "Publish Content" form is limited by your browser's size restriction.

If you use HTML tags without your own CSS, then CSS that your remote syndication sites employ may effect your content's formatting. This will allow syndication sites to fit your content to their site style.

Embedding Affiliate Codes

Embedding affiliate codes (or any other codes or text unique to the web site publishing your content) requires two steps.

1. Putting affiliate code placeholders into the content to syndicate.
2. Adding a parameter (or parameters) to the JavaScript and/or PHP syndication code.

Those two steps make it possible to deliver syndicated content with links containing the destination affiliate site's correct affiliate codes.

The Content to Syndicate

A generator is available to help you with determining the correct affiliate code placeholders. It's at

<http://willmaster.com/master/gateway1/support/>

The generator asks a few questions, you provide your links or the entire content you'll be syndicating, and then click the button. The next page contains the links or content with the correct affiliate code placeholders.

The rest of this “The Content to Syndicate” section is for those who wish to have an understanding of how to construct the affiliate code placeholders and for those who wish to construct the placeholders without benefit of the generator.

Let's use the following paragraph as an example of content that might be syndicated:

```
<p>
You've found the answer.
</p>
<p>
This is good stuff.
<a href="http://stuff.com/? [[affcode|defaultcode]] ">
Click here to buy.
</a>
</p>
<p>
It might not be here tomorrow!
</p>
```

Affiliate code placeholders are between double square bracket characters.

Affiliate code placeholders have two parts, the parts separated with two double vertical line characters.

The left part is the key that will be replaced with the affiliate's code. The affiliate code will be specified in the JavaScript or PHP syndication code published at the syndication/affiliate web site (see below).

The right half of the placeholder is the default affiliate code, to be used when no affiliate code is provided in the JavaScript or PHP syndication code.

When the content is syndicated to the affiliate's web site, the affiliate code placeholder will be replaced with either the affiliate's code or the default code, depending on what parameters are found in the JavaScript and/or PHP syndication code. The affiliate code parameter is specified by the affiliate web site.

Let's suppose the affiliate web site specifies the value MYID. When the above example content is published on the affiliate web site, it becomes:

```
<p>
You've found the answer.
</p>
<p>
This is good stuff.
<a href="http://stuff.com/?MYID">
Click here to buy.
</a>
</p>
<p>
It might not be here tomorrow!
</p>
```

If the affiliate web site fails to specify an affiliate code, the content becomes:

```
<p>
You've found the answer.
</p>
<p>
This is good stuff.
<a href="http://stuff.com/?defaultcode">
Click here to buy.
</a>
</p>
<p>
It might not be here tomorrow!
</p>
```

That's the basics for the content to syndicate.

It can be more complex. The same placeholder may be repeated in the content. And the content may contain several different placeholders.

If the content contains several different placeholders and the affiliate web site provides values for only some of the keys, those omitted will be published with the default values.

The default values may be blank – i.e.,

```
[[affcode|]]
```

– but the double vertical bar characters must still be present in the placeholder. If the affiliate web site provides no value for a key

and there is no default value, then the placeholder will be removed and replaced with nothing.

The JavaScript and/or PHP Syndication Code

A generator is available to help you with determining the correct URL parameters for your JavaScript and/or PHP syndication code. It's at <http://willmaster.com/master/gateway1/support/>

The generator asks a few questions, you provide the JavaScript or PHP code to syndicate your content with, and then click the button. The next page contains the converted syndication code.

The rest of this “The JavaScript and/or PHP Syndication Code” section is for those who wish to have an understanding of how to construct the JavaScript and/or PHP URL parameters and for those who wish to construct the parameters without benefit of the generator.

The JavaScript and the PHP code each contain the URL to the Master Syndication Gateway V2 content delivery script. The JavaScript and the 3-line method two PHP code contain the absolute http://... URL. The 38-line method one PHP code contains the URL minus the http:// and domain name part.

The URL is slightly different, depending on whether the channel is “open” or “restricted.”

Here is an example of each:

JavaScript –

```
src="http://example.com/cgi-bin/MSG.cgi?channel"  
src="http://example.com/cgi-bin/MSG.cgi?channel=DOMAIN"
```

PHP –

```
/cgi-bin/MSG.cgi?PHP2&channel  
/cgi-bin/MSG.cgi?PHP2&channel=DOMAIN
```

Notice that each URL contains a question mark character followed by information. The information following the question mark is the URL's parameters.

The URLs with =DOMAIN in the parameters is the URL of a “restricted” channel (DOMAIN would be replaced with the domain name where the content is being syndicated — the domain name does not include the http://... of a URL nor the www. part sometimes prepended). The other URLs are of an “open” channel.

When the parameters are changed according to this “The JavaScript and/or PHP Syndication Code” section, the JavaScript and PHP code can deliver syndicated content with links containing the destination affiliate site's correct affiliate codes.

To use this feature, append

&key=VALUE

to the URL's parameters.

"key" is the affiliate code key name of the placeholder of your content. "VALUE" is the affiliate code itself, which is provided by the syndication/affiliate web site.

For example, if the affiliate code placeholders (see "The Content to Syndicate" section, above) is

`[[affcode||defaultcode]]`

then the key is `affcode`

The parameters for an "open" channel would then become:

?channel&affcode=VALUE

The affiliate web site would replace `VALUE` with its affiliate code before pasting the JavaScript or PHP syndication code into web pages.

The parameters for an “open” channel would then become:

`?channel=DOMAIN&affcode=VALUE`

The affiliate web site would replace `VALUE` with its affiliate code and replace `DOMAIN` with the affiliate's web site domain name before pasting the JavaScript or PHP syndication code into web pages.

Again, a generator is available to help you with the placeholders. It's at <http://willmaster.com/master/gateway1/support/>

Technical Support

Thank you for your purchase of Master Syndication Gateway V2.

See <http://willmaster.com/gateway1/support/> or the "Contact" links of our various web sites to initiate technical support. Some of our web sites are:

<http://BontragerConnection.com/>

<http://BontragerCGI.com/>

<http://LightFocus.com/>

<http://WillMaster.com/>

The <http://willmaster.com/gateway1/support/> web page contains links to user and information manuals to make your life easier. These are in PDF format and are available in several page sizes.

The FAQ at <http://willmaster.com/support/faq/> can be consulted for answers to common questions. And the CGI Q&A Forum at <http://willmaster.com/support/cgi-bin/forum/MBP.cgi> can be used to ask questions whose answers may be of interest to others.