

Create an administrative back-end with WebAssist extensions

As a website owner or administrator, having the ability to manage or maintain your site easily is essential. With a well thought out administrative back-end, you can track purchases, manage user registrations, and add/update/delete products from your catalog. Everything you want to control on your site, you will want to include in the Admin back-end.

This How To guides you through using various WebAssist extensions to create a secure and fully-functional administrative back-end for your website. This administrative back-end will include the following functionality.

- Log-in and Log Out
- Creating and managing user registrations
- Review orders and revenue
- Manage your product catalog
- Back-end navigation

For an example of a functional admin back-end, check out the PowerStore demo at <http://www.powerstore-demo.com/Admin/>.



This document is provided to give you an idea of what you may want to include in your admin back-end and a recommended approach. If your particular website does not require a feature covered in this document, you do not need to create that feature.

Note: All the features that are created in this tutorial require you use a database for storing details for user registrations, orders, and for your product catalog.

What Do You Need to Start?

- Dreamweaver 8, CS3, or CS4
- DataAssist
- Digital File Pro (Dreamweaver CS3 or CS4)
- SecurityAssist
- Cookies Toolkit
- Validation Toolkit
- CSS Menu Writer

Use DataAssist to create your administrative pages

Most of the Administrative pages for this section of your site will be created using DataAssist. With DataAssist, you can create pages for inserting, updating, searching and displaying any content in your database.

In this section you will want to run through the DataAssist wizard three times, once for your user registration pages, again for the orders pages and then one last time for the product catalog pages.

Note: If a step does not seem to apply to you - for example, if you don't have users register on your website, simply move on to the next step.

For steps on accomplishing the following tasks, review the [DataAssist Getting Started Guide](#)  .

Creating the user registration pages

As you proceed through the DataAssist wizard to create your user registration pages, make sure to specify the following.

- Choose the database table that contains all your user registrations.
- Choose to create Insert, Update, Delete, Search, Results, and Detail pages.
This way, you have all the pages you may need.
- For all pages being created by DataAssist, store them within a subdirectory called 'admin'.
This will allow you to easily manage and secure all your admin pages.
- For each of the pages, remove any fields that you won't benefit from displaying.
- For each of the pages, rename the Labels to be as organized as possible.

Creating the order tracking pages

The pages for tracking orders are intended to give the administrator the ability to search, track and review orders.

With orders, you will want to limit the fields that can be changed on the update page. This is to make sure that you do not change any order details that would create an inconsistency with your payment gateway's records.

- Choose the database table that contains all your orders.
- Choose to create Update, Delete, Search, Results, and Detail pages. *You will not be able to process a purchase through an Insert page, so this has not been included.*
- For each of the pages, remove any fields that you won't benefit from displaying.
- On the Update page, specify the following columns to display as Text.
 - Purchaser
 - Purchase Date
 - Shipping cost
 - Tax
 - Total Purchase Amount

Note: By displaying these columns as text, you are preventing them from being updated.

- For all pages being created by DataAssist, store them within a subdirectory called 'admin'.
- For each of the pages, rename the Labels to be as organized as possible.

Managing your product catalog

If you have a database-driven product catalog, you can easily create DataAssist pages for managing those products.

Run through the DataAssist wizard one last time to create these pages.

- Choose the database table that contains all your products.

- Choose to create Insert, Update, Delete, Search, Results, and Detail pages.
- For all pages being created by DataAssist, store them within a subdirectory called 'admin'.
This will allow you to easily manage and secure all your admin pages.
- For each of the pages, remove any fields that you won't benefit from displaying.
- For each of the pages, rename the Labels to be as organized as possible.

Uploading product images?

If you have an image for each of the products in your catalog, you will want to include the ability to upload that image within your admin back-end. Typically, you want this capability on the product's Insert and Update pages you just created.

To add this feature, you will use Digital File Pro. Follow this [How To on adding Digital File Pro to your DataAssist Insert and Update pages](#)  for more information.

- If you are using Digital File Pro 2, you may want to output a small (thumbnail) version of your image to display on results page, as well as a larger version, which you would display on the detail pages.
Digital File Pro v1 users will need to provide two separate file upload fields.
- Make sure to follow the How To for details regarding displaying the initial value on the Update page.

Applying Security using SecurityAssist and Cookies Toolkit

Now that you have created your administrative pages, you will want to apply security restrictions, and create log in and log out pages.

With SecurityAssist and Cookies Toolkit both installed, you can easily add log-in functionality and apply cookies to your site.



Before running through the SecurityAssist wizard, you may want to make sure that your database is properly setup. Your users table (the table containing user registrations) should have a column for access level. This way, you can specify certain users to be administrators.

1. Referring to the [SecurityAssist Getting Started Guide](#)  create **log in**, and **log out** pages.
 - Name these pages, **admin_login** and **admin_logout**.
 - Specify for these pages to be stored in the admin directory.
 - On Step 4, you will have the opportunity to customize the log in page. The 'Remember Me' and 'Automatic Login' options will only display if Cookies Toolkit is installed.
2. Using the SecurityAssist Access Pages Manager, restrict access to all pages within the Admin section to those logged in to the Administrative area.
For instructions, review the SecurityAssist Getting Started Guide.



For more customized user level authentication, review the [User Level Authentication Solution Recipe](#).

Applying validation to your DataAssist pages

Using Validation Toolkit you can apply validation to your DataAssist Insert and Update pages, making sure what is entered into your database is correctly formatted.

Review the [Validation Toolkit Getting Started Guide](#)  for instructions on applying client-side and server-side validations to those pages.

Make sure to apply validation to the following fields.

- Email address
- Username
- Password (specify minimum character length)
- Zip/Postal Codes
- Price

Note: For any field that must have a value entered, you should make sure to at least apply the Required validation, to alert you if you forget to enter something in that field.

Creating the back-end navigation

In order to make your administrative back-end easy to use, you will want to create a navigation menu that gives you access to all the pages you will need.

Using CSS Menu Writer, you can create a straight forward navigation that includes links to all the pages you will need.

Follow the [CSS Menu Writer Getting Started Guide](#)  for instructions on creating the navigation.

Make sure to include links to the following pages:

- **Products**
 - Products Search
 - Insert New Product
 - View/Edit Products (goes to the product's results page)

- **Users**
 - View/Edit Users (goes to the user's results page)
 - Insert New User
 - Search User

- **Orders**
 - View/Update Orders (goes to the order's results page)
 - Search Orders

Note: You may want to include additional links on your page, or within the CSS Menu Writer navigation, including a Log Out link that takes you to the log out page created by SecurityAssist.

Closing

You've now created your administrative back-end. It is very likely, that you will discover additional features that you will want to add to this section of your site. In those cases, take a look at other WebAssist extensions and see how they can add to your administrative back-end.

Here are some ideas on more unique additions to administrative back-ends.

- Use Pro Maps for Google to display where your customers are from.
- Use Dynamic Web Charts to chart your sales or registrations.
- Add iRite to your DataAssist pages to easily format product details.
- Use Universal Email to create a page for easily contacting customers.

Review the various How To's and Getting Started Guides for these products to learn how you could implement these features and more.