

User Groups/Price Plans Relationship

One of the most powerful aspects of this software is its ability to handle the User Group and Price Plan relationship. The most important reason for having User Groups is that it provides you a means to charge different groups of users different pricing fees as well as different ways of pricing. This is because you can have as many Price Plans (Pricing Schemes) in the system as you want (Premier Editions and up). Each user registers into a user group during the registration process and is by default attached to the price plan that is attached to that user group within the admin tool. This is an important concept to grasp if you want to take full advantage of what this software has to offer. We will first explain what each function is and then how they work together to help you find a combination that will fit your sales and marketing schemes.

Note that not all editions of the software have the ability to insert user groups and price plans into the system thus allowing you only one user group and price plan. Check the features of your edition to make sure this is a feature of that edition if you need this feature in your pricing/user group model.

User Groups

Every user who registers on your site is placed in what we call a "User Group". This will happen at the time of their registration process, based upon what they enter on the [Registration Code](#) (explained later) page if you use this feature. Note that allowing a registration code at registration is a choice you allow. You can force all new registrants into one user group if you wish or you can use the registration code feature to allow them to be placed in a specific user group. If you use the registration code feature the user will see a registration code page in the first page of the registration process and the user will either enter a Registration Code to be placed in a specific user group or no code at all to be placed in the default user group. Either way, they will be placed into a User Group. The user who enters a registration code will be placed into the User Group linked to that code. The user who enters "no code" will be placed into the "default" User Group. You will select which User Group will be the "default user group" in the User Group Management admin tool of the admin. As the administrator of the site you can create as many User Groups as you want if your edition of the software allows it.

So what is the value of having more than one User Group? The answer is simple. Each User Group that you create can have its own distinct [Price Plan](#) (explained later) attached to it. This functionality allows you to run any number of marketing campaigns all with different perks for those who sign up through that campaign, to give specific user "volume discounts" or just to give your friends special pricing. Also, through the Users / User Groups menu of the software's admin, you can search and send messages on a User Group basis. That way if you make any changes associated to that User Group's settings or Price Plan, you can easily send out a blanket email to everyone that is in that particular User Group.

Other group specific features include the following:

- The ability to display a "splash page" to just those user groups user within the registration or place a listing processes to make sure they are aware of anything specific to them or just to say thank you.
- Expose specific payment gateways to any specific user group using the group specific payment gateway configuration. Not available in all editions of the software.

- You can also control access to different client side user management tools on a user group by user group basis. You may choose to not allow some user groups to place any listings into the system. If so they don't need to see listing placement or listing management links within their client side admin tool.
- Some editions of the software allow the use of user group questions. These questions act just like category specific questions. They appear as additional questions in the place a listing process and if answered will appear in the listing details page with the other category specific questions they have answered. Yet these questions only appear to the users of the user group they are attached to.
- Some editions of the software allow you to use a "sponsored by" message. You can put a special bit of html or text in the listing details page of all users in a specific user group. You can create a **power users** user group with special pricing and then identify each "power users" listing with an icon or special message within each of their listings.

Through the admin, you also have the ability to call up each user that is registered in the system, either through the "list users" or "search users" menus. After doing so, you can access and edit each user's data, including the User Group that they are in.

<tip c n>**Note:** If you only have one User Group entered into the system (usually there is only one by default), then the Registration Code page will not appear at all. Instead, the user will be taken directly to the Main Registration page, and they will automatically be entered into the default User Group. If you enter another User Group at a later time, you can manually move current registrants to your new User Group as described above. </tip>

For a more in depth explanation of how User Groups work, please visit the [Users / User Groups](#) section of this manual.

Registration Codes

A "Registration Code" (or Promotional Code) is essentially the key that ties each user to their respective User Group. You will assign each User Group that you create its own unique Registration Code so that when the user enters it on the Registration Code page, they will be placed in that corresponding User Group. You can distribute Registration Codes to friends, family, and/or during various marketing campaigns that you run. You can also display the Registration Codes themselves on the Registration page, so that the user can select which User Group (really which Price Plan) they want to fall under.

You generate your own Registration Code every time you create a new User Group in the User Group Management pages of the admin. You can also change and/or remove a registration code from a user group's admin tool and not affect any of the users that have already been placed in that user group.

If there are no registration codes in any user group the registration code page will not appear in registration process. But as long as there is one user group in the system with a registration code the registration code page will appear in the registration process.

<tip c n>**Note:** We recommend that you DO NOT use any spaces and only use letters and numbers (no special characters) when setting up your Registration Codes. You can also go back later and assign a Registration Code to an existing User Group.</tip>

Price Plans

A "Price Plan" is the tool that the admin uses to charge users certain prices for certain features, such as "featured listing status", "listing bolding", "price per picture", "price per category", etc. These [listing extras](#) must first be turned on site-wide in order to use them on your site and assign a price to each within the Price Plan. The software offers you a variety of ways to charge users, or not charge users. See the [Price Plans](#) section of this User Manual for a more in depth explanation of your Price Plan configuration choices.

Something worth noting, is that your site visitors never really know that they are being placed into a "User Group". Instead, they are signing up based upon the "Price Plan" that you have advertised to them. So, although you know that they are associated with a User Group, they only care that the Price Plan they fall under gives them everything that it was advertised to. So, you need to pay particular attention to the Price Plan that you associate to each User Group.

Another important feature of Price Plans is that you can set them to either expire on a fixed date, expire at a fixed time from registration or "never expire". And when they do expire users will immediately be moved to the price plan you set for them to expire into. This "expiration" happens automatically and leaves the both price plans in the system but simply moves users from one price to the another so they will have different "pricing" after the expiration. What this means is that any User Group that has the expiring Price Plan associated with it, will automatically default to the new Price Plan without your intervention. This is extremely valuable if you want to set certain promotions to be available for a designated period of time. It is a "hands off" approach in that the system will keep track of your Price Plan Promotional periods and expirations for you saving you the admin nightmare of trying to do this yourself.

<tip c n>**Note:** You have the capability to assign the same Price Plan to every User Group if you so desire.</tip>

Within the Enterprise edition you also have the ability to attach more than one fee-based price plan to the same user group. This **ONLY** applies to fee-based price plans. You can only attach one subscription-based price plan to any specific user group. If you attach a subscription based price plan to a user group that will be the **ONLY** price plan you can attach to that user group.

Subscription based price plans also allow you to give free subscription periods at registration. You can use this feature to give a short trial period to your site before the client has to pay for a full subscription. You can also use this feature in conjunction with the "expire price plans" feature but note try not to confuse the two. The expiration of the price plan will not affect the expiration of the subscription and vice versa.

Summary

One important thing to note is that the client cannot change their user group or price plan association on the client side. If you need a client to change user groups you will need to do so as the admin in the admin tool. You have the ability to move all users in a user group from that user group to another. You also have the ability to move individual users from user group to another. When you move a user from one user group to another their price plan is changed to that of the newly attached user group.

You cannot directly move a user from one price plan to another. You can change the price plan their

user group is attached to or move them to another user group to get the pricing attached to that user group. You can also delete a price plan from the system and in doing so the system asks you which other price plan you wish to move users currently in that price plan to.

We hope that this explanation has helped you better understand the valuable tools located in the User Groups / Price Plans section of this software. A firm grasp of these concepts will help to better assure you of setting up of a successful Listings website.

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