

# Instructions for using Urban Mediator

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The following instructions are target to users of Urban Mediator. The first set provides general instructions for use for casual users. The second set of instructions is geared for more advanced users who are interested in using the full potential of Urban Mediator as a public participation tool.

## General instructions for UM use

The bulk of the following user documentation automatically appears as Online Help, under the Help section of any Urban Mediator instance using UM v2.0. It is currently available in English and awaiting translations in other languages.

### Desktop version

Urban Mediator's full set of functionalities is available in the desktop version. A series of explanatory screencasts that complement the following instructions will soon be made available.

#### - Login

In order to be able to add information to Urban Mediator (for example: add points for a Topic, or create a Topic), you will have to first Log in.

You can register and create a username and password for yourself and use it to login anytime.

You can also log in as an anonymous guest. For that, simply copy the characters you see in the picture in the Login page. This login allows you to submit information and edit it for the time you keep your browser window open or until you log out.

#### - Points: features and operations

Points are used to mark locations that hold information such as location (Where), creator (Who), time of creation (When), explanation (What), purpose (Why). Anyone logged in to *Urban Mediator* can create a Point, within the context of a Topic, by marking it on the map or giving a street address, and by giving it a name and a set of keywords.

#### View Points

You can view Points within the context of a Topic in the following fashion:

- From a Point list: click on the List link and icon that is available for each Topic. You can choose to order the list by: recently updated, newest, oldest, or by the point titles alphabetical order.

- From the map view: click on the Map link and icon that is available for each Topic. On the map, you can click on the points to open up their info box.

You can filter your view by using the Topic's Tag cloud and clicking on the desired tag. You can also search the topic by using the Search topic functionality.

### **Create Points**

You can add a point only within the context of an existing Topic.

1. Go to the desired Topic page.
2. Click on the Add point buttons that are available to the right hand side of the page. These buttons can either show the default text "Add new point" or show a text generated by the creator of the Topic. There can also be one or more buttons
3. Select the desired spot on the map. You can zoom in and out using the bar at the left of the map. You can move right or left, up or down, by using the arrows on the left of the map. Click on the desired spot, this will mark the selected spot. You can also mark the location by simply typing the street address in the field just under the map and click on Find.
4. Write an appropriate title for your point/contribution
5. Write a short description
6. Attach a picture if you want. The picture will be uploaded from your computer.
7. Write tags that describe your contribution
8. Click Submit
8. If you had not logged in, you will be asked to do it at this point.

### **Edit and Delete points**

Registered users can edit and delete their own points, when logged in.

Visitors can delete and edit their own only during the time they are logged in as visitors. Once a visitor logs out or closes the browser, s/he can't edit nor delete the created points anymore.

### **- Topics: features and operations**

**Topics** are used to gather collections of Points related to an issue of interest. Anyone logged in to *Urban Mediator* can set up a Topic by giving it a name, a description, a color scheme, an icon, and a map area that shows as the default area.

Urban Mediator offers the possibility to create topics of interest where collection of

location-based information (points) can be gathered. Topics can be created to show information coming from external systems and websites, through feeds. Topics can also be created for users to submit information to (add points to a topic).

### **View Topic**

You can view the list of Topics on the Urban Mediator frontpage. This list can be ordered by: recently updated, newest, most points, or by the topic titles' alphabetical order.

There can also be a list of highlighted topics that is set up by the Urban Mediator administrator.

### **Create Topics**

1. In order to create a Topic on Urban Mediator, you have to be a registered user. If you have to yet registered, you can do it by going to the Sign up page and choosing a username and password.
2. Log in using your Username and password
3. Click on the “Add new topic” button on the Urban Mediator frontpage.
4. Fill in the required fields in the form. Remember to keep the description short (maximum 4 lines). You can customize your topic page by choosing a color scheme and an icon. You can upload an image of your own to use an icon. Best results are achieved if the image is 60x60 pixels.
5. Click Submit
6. Continue by choosing the map that will appear on your topic page:
  - choose the desired zoom level by using the + and – buttons on the top left hand side of the map
  - pan the map to the desired area by using the arrows on the top left hand side of the map, or by grabbing and moving the map
  - choose the map's center point by clicking on it
  - You can also go directly to a desired location on the map by typing in the exact street address
7. Choose Yes for Automatic zoom if you want your topic map to adjust so that it will show the area including all the points created for that topic. Choose No for Automatic zoom if you want the topic map's default view to always remain the same as the one chosen in step 6. Automatic zoom is set to No as the default.

For instructions on how to use the Advanced Settings for topic page, please refer to the section on advanced settings.

## Topic tools

The set of tools for Topics allows you to:

- Import newsfeeds from external source, like RSS or Atom feeds, to a Board (*Newsfeed import*). Importing a GeoRSS feeds will automatically create points on the board.

- Create a browser button that allows posting a current page to Urban Mediator and creating a Point containing a link to it (*Post to Urban Mediator*).

- Connect an UM topic to another system (*Add trigger*), for example the ICING system.

Describe the trigger: give a short description for the trigger.

Condition (e.g. *addpoint*): condition which fires the trigger (e.g. when user adds a point.) For example, 'addpoint' means that the trigger will be fired right after the point has been added. It allows the implementation of hooks, such as sending the point as an issue via Issue Reporter.

Action: the action that the specific adapter should perform in the even of fulfilled condition, e.g. send

Adapter: the name of the adapter used (for example: *iisys*, *ismart*, *sendmail*)

URL (as a parameter for the adapter): additional parameter for the adapter, for example, *DataAccessor URI* where issues are being stored

- Convert the Topic's point information into CSV (Comma Separated Values). The *CSV export tool* makes it possible to automatically get a CSV file with all the topic's points data.

## Widgets

It is possible to easily generate web widgets that can be embedded in any webpage. These widgets can for example be for adding a point to UM, for showing the list of recent points, for creating a map, or for creating a note. It is also possible to generate a combo widget that includes two or more of the UM widgets (for example, Add point widget + Point list widget). For more detailed instructions refer to the Widget Creation section.

## Urban Mediator feeds

You can subscribe to and use Urban Mediator information in other applications by using the Urban Mediator RSS feeds. The Urban Mediator RSS feed icon appears on selected Urban Mediator pages and in your browser's address bar.

## Mobile version

A chosen set of functionalities is available for the Urban Mediator mobile version.

*Detailed instructions will be added here soon.*

## Advanced settings

The advanced settings are geared for more advanced users who are interested in using the full set of Urban Mediator tools and functionalities in order to set up participatory projects.

### Advanced topic settings

Once you have created a basic topic page, you can customize it further by editing the advanced settings (available under Settings):

#### 1. Topic page elements

You can choose which elements appear on the topic page's right hand side column, and in which order they appear (the order of appearance on the topic right hand side column is from up to down and corresponds to the order in the settings field, from left to right):

new point button: the default "Add new point" button that automatically appears when a topic is created (see Figure 1). You might consider removing this default button if you create customized buttons using the Widgets options (see Figure 2).

widgets: any widget created for a particular topic using the widgetizers functionalities of Urban Mediator. The widgetizers are available under the Widget section. Widgets can be imbedded in the Topic page and their order of appearance on the right-hand side topic column is set here. The most common widgets to add to the Topic page are the Add Point button ones.

search: the search topic field (for searching the topic only, not the whole Urban Mediator)

tagcloud: a tagcloud showing the most used tags in the points created for this topic

triggers: and advanced features that can connect urban mediator to other systems

hr: the diamond shape graphical elements that acts as a separator between elements of the topic's right-hand side column

#### 2. Point display

You can choose what kind of information is shown for each point, on the topic points list:

title: The title of the point, as provided by the point creator

added: the time when the point was added

url: if the point is linked to an external web page, this page's URL would appear

description-full: the full description for the point, as provided by the point creator

author: the username of the creator of the point, or the visitor number if the point was created anonymously

tags: the keywords attached to the point (both hidden ones set by the topic creator and the ones chosen by the point creator)

### 3. Default view mode

You can choose whether the default view for your topic page shows the map or the list of points. Both view are of course always available to users by clicking on the map and list link on the topic view.

### 4. Point view order

You can set the default view for the topic's point list:

recently updated: shows the most recently updated points first

newest: shows the newest created points first

title: shows the list of points ordered according to the alphabetical order of the points titles

### 5. Who can add points

You can choose who can add points to your topic:

anyone: Anyone can submit anonymously, without even typing the security number verification. This makes it possible for anyone to quickly submit points anonymously, but this might encourage spam.

visitors: Anyone can submit, using their own username and password, or anonymously. Anonymous users have to however type a security number.

registered: Only users who have registered to UM can submit points.

topic administrators: Only the topic administrators can submit points.

nobody: There is no possibility to submit points to a topic. This possibility is handy for topics that receive their information as feeds from other systems of websites, and do not require users to submit information (see Figure 1). Moreover, this possibility can be chosen if the topic would need to stop being active and would no more need to receive information from users.



Figure 1: Example of a Topic using the default Add point button

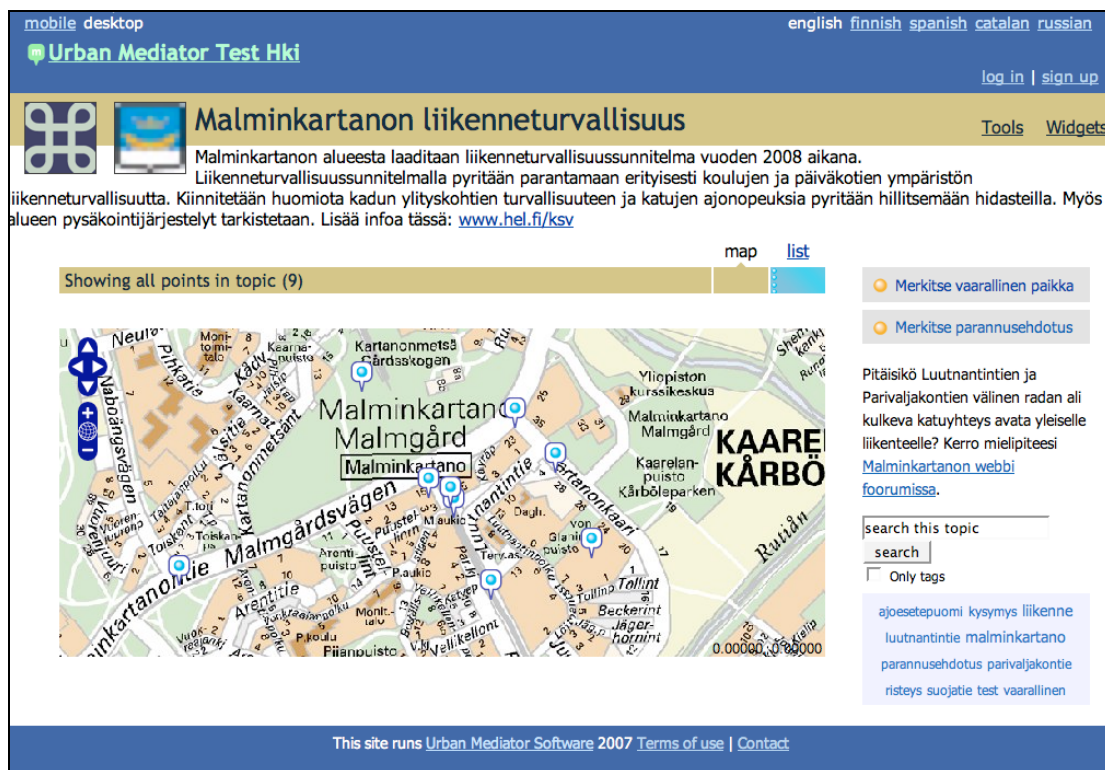


Figure 2: Example of a topic using two customized Add point buttons, each guiding the users to submit a particular kind of information.



The screenshot shows the Urban Mediator Test Hki interface. At the top, there are navigation options for 'mobile' and 'desktop', and language options for 'english', 'finnish', 'spanish', 'catalan', and 'russian'. The main header reads 'Urban Mediator Test Hki' with a logo. Below this, there's a section for 'Helsinki Virtual Village' with a sub-header 'Events and information coming from HVV. You may have noticed slight delay before getting to this page. It was due to update of the news from the site.' The main content area shows a list of points under the heading 'Showing all points in topic (29), page 1 of 2'. The points are ordered by 'recently updated' and include:

- 'Super Piss & Lady Lasol, 16 April' with a URL and a description of an art exhibition at the Arabian museum.
- 'iceBREAK - koskimelontaa, 11 April' with a URL and a detailed description of an icebreaker canoeing event in Helsinki.
- 'Close Encounters, 3 April'.

A search box on the right allows searching for the topic, and there are links for 'map' and 'list' views. A note states 'Topic doesn't allow new points at the moment.' There are also links for 'hyötykasviyhdistys kukkienasettelu kurssi tapahtumat' and the website 'www.helsinkivirtualvillage.fi'.

Figure 3: Example of a Topic that shows feeds coming from other websites, with no possibility for users to add their own points manually

## Connecting UM to other information sources using feeds

UM can be connected to other systems through feeds (ATOM, RSS) by connecting a topic to the feed.

In order to set up a topic to receive feeds, go to the topic's Tools and choose Newsfeed import. You'll need to fill the following:

Feed address (URL): this is the URL of the feed

Describe the feed: a short description for the feed

Feed for issues? → tick this option if special treatment is needed for issues (like indicating where they are stored or where they come from)

Check interval in seconds: the time lapse for refreshing feeds

It is possible for a topic to receive feeds from any website that provides geoRSS feeds. In the context of ICING for example, Topics can be set to receive feeds from eSpatial's iSmart system, making it possible therefore to view information created using other ICING components, such as the iMessenger application. For more information contact the Icing consortium: <http://www.fp6-project-icing.eu/index.html>

## Connecting a Topic to the Complete Icing system (via IISYS)

These instructions are only for users involved in a project where the ICING system is used. For more information contact the Icing consortium: <http://www.fp6-project-icing.eu/index.html>

It is possible to connect a UM topic to the Icing system, so that points created on that topic reach the IISYS and become available to users using other components of the system.

Go to the topic's Tools and choose "Add trigger" and fill the following fields:

Describe the trigger: give a short description for the trigger. For Icing, this can be for example: ICING city

Condition (e.g. addpoint): condition which fires the trigger (e.g. when user adds a point.) For example, 'addpoint' means that the trigger will be fired right after the point has been added. It allows the implementation of hooks, such as sending the point as an issue via Issue Reporter.

Action: the action that the specific adapter should perform in the even of fulfilled condition, e.g. send

Adapter: the name of the adapter used (for example: iisys, ismart, sendmail)

URL (as a parameter for the adapter): additional parameter for the adapter, for example, DataAccessor URI where issues are being stored

## Widgets creation

A set of widgetizers are available for advanced users who want to extend Urban Mediator's topic functionalities to their own website or blog.

### **"Add point" widget**

You can create customized "Add point" buttons for both your topic page and for imbedding on any other website. For that, you need to go to Widgets and choose "Add point button".

The critical information to fill is the following:

Widget Basic Settings:

- Text that will show on button
- Text to show when point creation is disabled

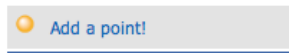
Add Point page Basic Settings:

- Point title example

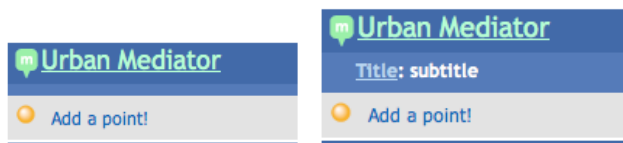
- List of fixed hidden tags → these tags are set by the topic admin and are always attached to any point a user creates, using this widget. These tags especially help topic owners to filter the information collected according to their own needs.
- List of predefined tags (leave empty for none) → this feature is still more experimental
- Free tags (user's own)
- Point Tags example (for free tags)

If you want to embed the widget into an external page, you might consider adding a header to the button itself. This header can show the UM logo as well as a title and subtitle.

An Add Point button without header is suitable for the Topic page, e.g.:



For an external page, it might be interesting to have more information, in the “header”, e.g.



Remember to choose a convenient height:

- for a simple button, the height should be 36 pixels (default)
- with the logo the height should be 72 pixels
- with the logo and a title the height should be 90 pixels

Note: remember to check how the widget looks in different browsers!

## **Make Note widget**

Creating some extra text that shows on the right hand side of the topic page can be done as follows:

Go to Widgets and select Make note. Then fill in the description and click Make html, then Add to topic page. This note can be used for example to insert logos or lists of relevant links.

### **Topic's point list widget**

You can create a web widget that shows the most recent points submitted to the topic. This topic is best used for external websites. Remember to choose the number of points to be display and test to find a convenient height and width for the widget. It is also possible to include a header (similarly as for the Add Point widget).

NOTE: It is possible to use several widgets one on top of the other, on an external page, by either positioning each of their `<iframe>` codes one after the other, or by creating a Combo widget using the UM widgets.

## Recommendations for affiliated sites

This document was originally written for the UM collaborators and possible stakeholders as guidelines.

One of Urban Mediator's goals is to bring together all relevant information related to a particular urban neighborhood. This includes existing online information from various official and non-official websites. Urban Mediator does not aim to replace these existing sources of information, but would rather offer access to them, giving users the possibility of accessing the variety of existing local information in such a way that it is always in the context of all other related information.


In order to include information into its index, Urban Mediator needs machine-readable web material. Each piece of data need to have metadata reflecting: What (usually a title), When (usually publication date), Where (WGS84 coordinates or other coordinates understood by UM), Why (some categorization, etc), Who (author or who is involved).

The following is a list of technical recommendations for websites that wish to be affiliated with Urban Mediator, or indeed other kinds of web applications that use information from external sources, like mashups. Please note that these recommendations should be considered as "giving a direction" rather than being strict requirements as in some cases there are no widely adopted formats and protocols.

### 1. Webfeeds

"A web feed is a data format used for serving users frequently updated content." A feed is in principle a collection of entries. Each entry has metadata associated with it: link to content, summary, author, datetime, tags (categories). Content is usually ordered by most recent entries first.

Popular webfeed formats: ATOM 1.0 and RSS 1.0, 2.0.

A typical webfeed logo: 

More information about feeds can be found here:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web\\_feed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_feed)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web\\_feed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_feed)[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web\\_feed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_feed) Web feeds works both ways: they can be used to syndicate data from the UM on the website or provide data to the UM from the web-site (or web-service).

### 2. Webfeeds with GeoRSS

GeoRSS encodes location information in RSS feeds. Webfeed with GeoRSS metadata make it therefore possible to visualize entries on a geographical map.

More information about GeoRss can be found here: <http://georss.org/>

### **3. Search API**

API means Application Programming Interface.

In case a site has a large enough database, it can provide an API to search it. Even if the site has a search form for users, it doesn't mean that other software can use this search easily. Search API enables software to make queries.

Most often APIs are made with HTTP, RDF, XML-RPC or SOAP.

The simplest form of "API" is a specially designed URL. For example, page behind the URL <http://del.icio.us/tag/Dapper> shows entries found by keyword (tag) Dapper.

For Urban Mediator to make use of search API, special software adapters may be needed. Right now, we are not using any specific standards but this can be discussed with the interested partners.

More information about APIs in general can be found here:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/API>

### **4. Web Widgets**

Another way to interact with Urban Mediator is embedding UM widget on one or more pages. UM widgets (when needed) are aware of their host page. Simple use case is "advertisement" of certain UM topic(s) which need user's (citizens) contributions. More complex example is connecting certain discussion on the web forum with locational data (points) and/or other similar discussions).

### **5. Possible other Internet formats**

There are various existing Internet formats can make web site content machine-readable, addressing the potentials of Web2.0. Using existing standards or emerging standards helps make interoperable Web possible.

Some examples include:

- "The Open Content Directory Format is intended to provide a concise, machine readable-listing of a set of syndicated services. The directory format is capable of supporting multiple sites, each with multiple services. Each service can have multiple formats such as RSS (RDF Site Summary), XHTML, Plain Text, Avantgo or WML format as well as separate publishing schedules or languages."

This site has a lot of real examples on how mashups can be done:  
<http://www.programmableweb.com/>

- "iCalendar is a standard (RFC 2445) for calendar data exchange."

Or <http://intertalchemistry.org/ocs/directory/0.5/>