

# **NicheDirectories.com**

## **Bulletin Board Moderator Instructions**

### **Introduction**

Forum moderators are like the crossing guards of the message board. They keep community members within the “crosswalk” so that the board can fulfill its purpose. In some cases, the purpose of the board demands very tight scrutiny; other times, the owners of the board prefer to let the conversation flow unfettered.

### **Responsibilities of the Moderator**

Moderators have the authority to:

- Edit messages
- Delete topics or messages
- Post a new topic
- Post replies
- Be notified via e-mail of each new message or topic
- Ban users

### **What does “moderating” mean?**

Generally, moderators have a threefold responsibility: to ensure that members are following the community rules, to assist new members, and to foster lively discussion. A good moderator ensures that his/her forum is inviting, active, and an asset to the community as a whole.

Of course, the purpose of the community will determine how strong the presence of the moderator should be. For example, in a message board provided for a teen audience, firm moderation may be necessary for the enjoyment of all members.

### **Moderator Etiquette**

The moderators should always be familiar with the specific rules and regulations of their board, but these are some general guidelines for good moderation.

#### **When to edit a message**

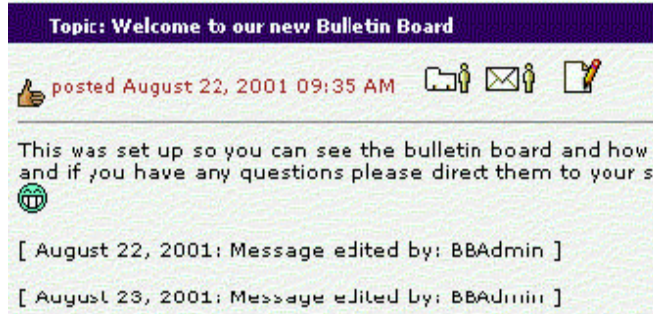
- Contains profanity
- Contains off-topic content
- Violates the board rules in some other way (contains advertising, etc.)

Editing is always visible to the community; whenever a message is edited, the date/time/edit author are shown within the message.

In general, it is preferable to edit a message rather than delete it entirely.

### How to edit a message:

1. Click on the icon that displays a pencil on paper. This is in the top right corner of the message.
2. Delete or add text.
3. Click “Edit Post” at the bottom of the screen.



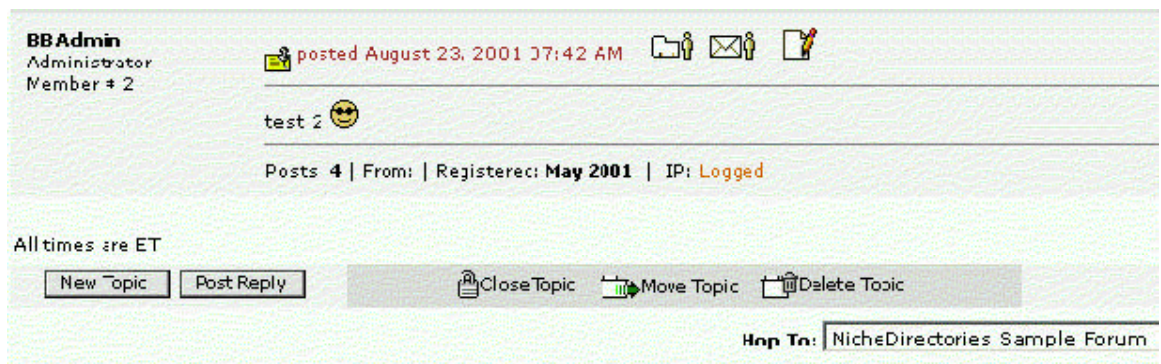
### When to delete a topic or message

- Unacceptable behavior (as determined by the tone of the community; e.g., profanity)
- Completely off-topic discussion
- No part of the topic/message is salvageable by editing
- Illegal/defamatory statements

Basically, whenever there is no value to the community that demands leaving the topic/message in place. It is good practice to e-mail the topic initiator to explain why it was deleted, unless the reason is totally obvious.

### How to delete a topic:

1. Click on a topic from the bulletin board main menu.
2. At the bottom of the page you will see a menu bar. Click on “Delete Topic.”



### How to delete a message:

1. Click on the pencil and paper icon on the top right corner of the message.
2. Check off the box next to “Delete Post?”

**Edit Post**

Only forum leaders or the person that posted this message may edit or delete this edit/delete posts!

Delete Post? (check box, if yes)

Note: deleting this post will result in the deletion of the entire topic, since this post

**Subject:** Welcome to our new Bulletin Board

**Message Icon:**

**Message:** This was set up so you can see the board and how it might work in your

### **When to ban a member**

- Repeated violation of the stated board rules or forum rules
- Offensive behavior (e.g., posting offensive material, harassing other members)
- Attempts at hacking or destroying the forum
- Repeated attempts to circumvent moderation or banning

Banning a member means that he/she can no longer post messages on your board. Normally, unruly members are given a warning prior to actually being banned, since that is a fairly serious step. The level of discipline should correspond to the seriousness of the offense.

### How to ban a member:

1. Compose an e-mail to [bb@nichedirectories.com](mailto:bb@nichedirectories.com).
2. List the user login names that you wish to ban.

### **When to close a topic**

- Discussion is heading off-topic, but does not merit deletion
- The initial message and replies contain valuable information, but further discussion is not desired
- The thread is becoming too lengthy

Sometimes it is difficult to decide whether to close a topic or delete it. In general, deference should be given to the members participating, and it's better to close a topic than to delete it. (If there are individual messages in the thread that are offensive, they can be individually removed---just be careful the remaining thread still makes sense.)

**How to close a topic:**

1. Click on a topic from the bulletin board main menu.
2. At the bottom of the page you will see a menu bar. Click on “Close Topic.”

