JW Player™ for Flash Drupal Module

Overview

The JW Player™ for Flash Module enables you to deliver video content through your Drupal website. This module has been developed by LongTail Video, the creator of the JW Player™, and allows for easy customization and embedding of the Player in the body of your Drupal nodes. It provides support for all of the player's configuration options, including skins, plugins and the LongTail Video AdSolution. In addition, it supports a powerful tag system that allows for dynamic customization at embed time, and gives you the capability of referencing external video content or node attachments.

For more information about the JW Player™ and the LongTail AdSolution please visit http://www.longtailvideo.com.

Installation

Figure 1

There are no requirements for this module other than having a Drupal 6.x installation. To install the module, extract jwplayermodule.zip and place the jwplayermodule folder in your Drupal modules directory (/sites/all/modules) on your web server.

Download the non-commercial JW Player™ at http://www.longtailvideo.com/players/jw-flv-player/. Extract the contents of the zip file. Navigate to the jwplayermodule directory (/sites/all/modules/jwplayermodule). Copy the player.swf and yt.swf file into the directory.

Login to your Drupal website and navigate to Administer > Site Building > Modules. The jwplayermodule will appear under the Media package. Make sure the "Enabled" checkbox is checked (see Figure 1) and click the "Save configuration" button. The module is now installed.

Configuration

The module allows for the creation of multiple "Players" which represent different configurations of the JW Player™. Each configured Player can be tied to multiple embedded players, which allows for a consistent look across your site.

To access the setup page navigate to "Administer > Site configuration > JW Player™ setup." You will see a page that contains two panels: "Manage Players" and "Player Details."Manage Players

Figure 2

The "Manage Players" section allows you to select an existing Player or the "New Player" option. Selecting the "New Player" option (see Figure 2) populates the "Player Details" section with the JW Player™ defaults.
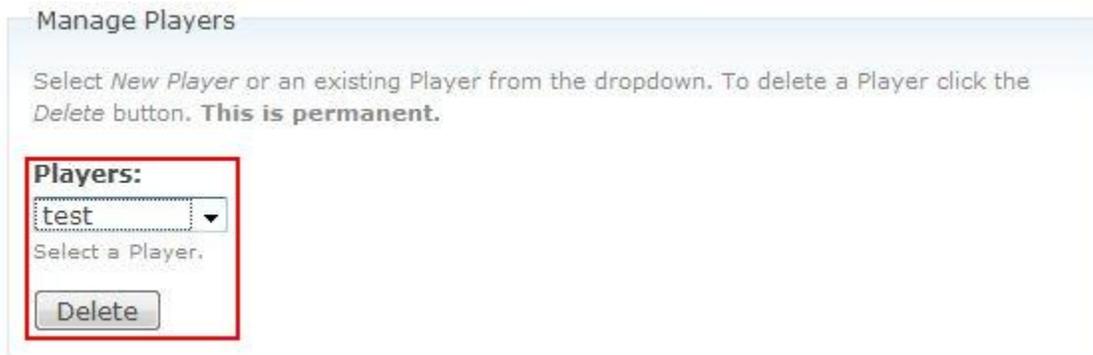
Figure 3

If you select an existing Player (see Figure 3) the "Player Details" section will be populated with the values saved for the selected Player. The "Delete" button will also appear. Clicking this button will

Figure 4

permanently delete the selected Player. Please note that deleting a Player will break any tags that reference it, so proceed with caution.Player Details

If you are creating a new Player the "Name" field will be blank (see Figure 4). Before saving your new Player make sure to enter a name for it.

Selecting an existing Player will cause the "Name" field to be populated with the name of the Player. If you make any changes to the configuration you can save it and the existing Player will be updated. However, if you enter a new name the configuration will be saved to a new Player with the new Name. This gives you the flexibility of using an existing Player as the basis for a new Player.

Configuration options are divided into four sections containing subsections as necessary. These will be described below.

Basic Player Settings

The Basic Player Settings (see Figure 5) encompass the most commonly used flashvars for the JW Player™. It is very likely that you will be making adjustments to these settings with each Player configuration that you create. These involve setting the player dimensions, and its basic appearance. Descriptions of what each flashvar does are provided when you expand the settings tabs.
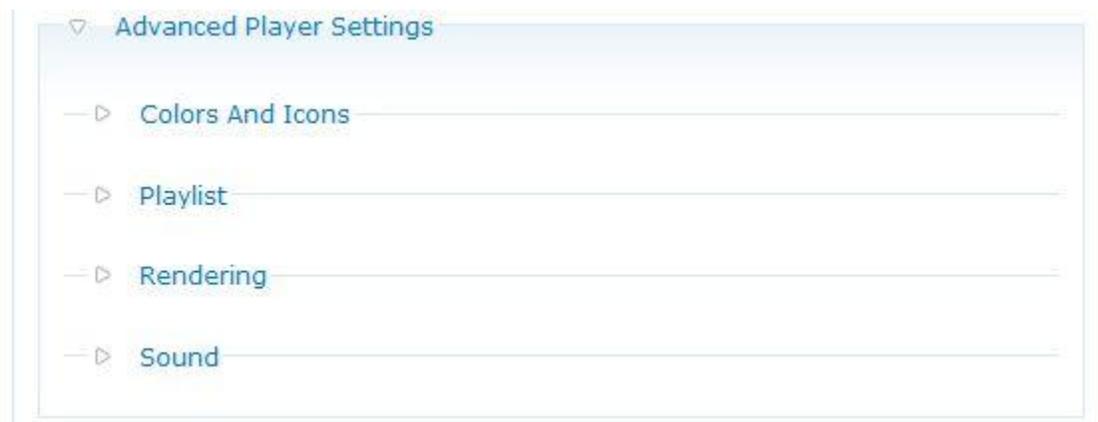
Advanced Player Settings

The Advanced Player Settings (see Figure 6) are used less than the Basic Player Settings and are not required for embedding the JW Player™. It is likely that you will make very few changes to the flashvars contained in this section. Again, descriptions of what each flashvar does are provided in the expanded tabs.

In general, the settings in *Colors and Icons* help to alter the color of the player including the control bar and background color. *Playlist* is only necessary when using a playlist file and you require custom behavior. *Rendering* affects the quality and aspect ratio of the video. Finally, *Sound* lets you preset the mute status and the volume level.

LongTail AdSolution
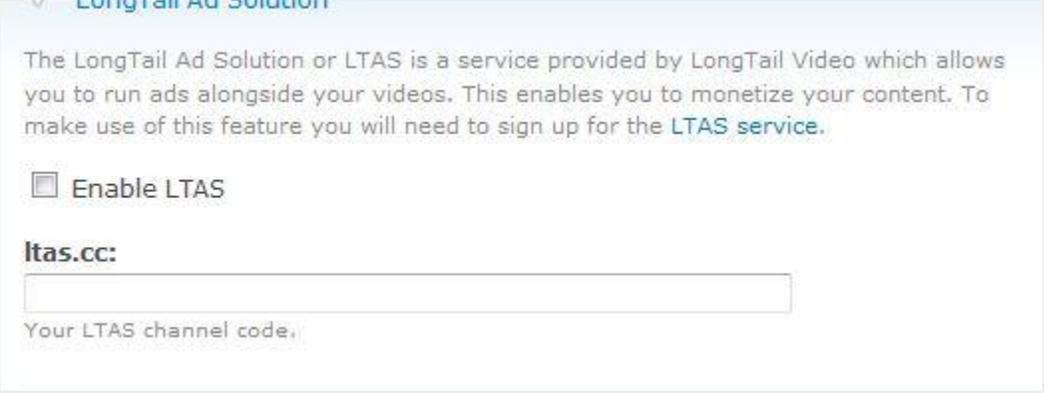
The LongTail AdSolution (LTAS) is a service provided by LongTail Video which allows you to run pre-roll, post-roll and overlay ads. This enables you to monetize your content. In order to make use of LTAS you will need to purchase a commercial JW Player™ license and acquire a channel code.

For information about purchasing a commercial license and installing your commercial player please refer to the Additional Considerations section later in this document. For more information about LTAS please visit http://www.longtailvideo.com/adsolution.

 Once you have been approved check the "Enable LTAS" check box and enter your channel code in the "ltas.cc" field (see Figure 7).
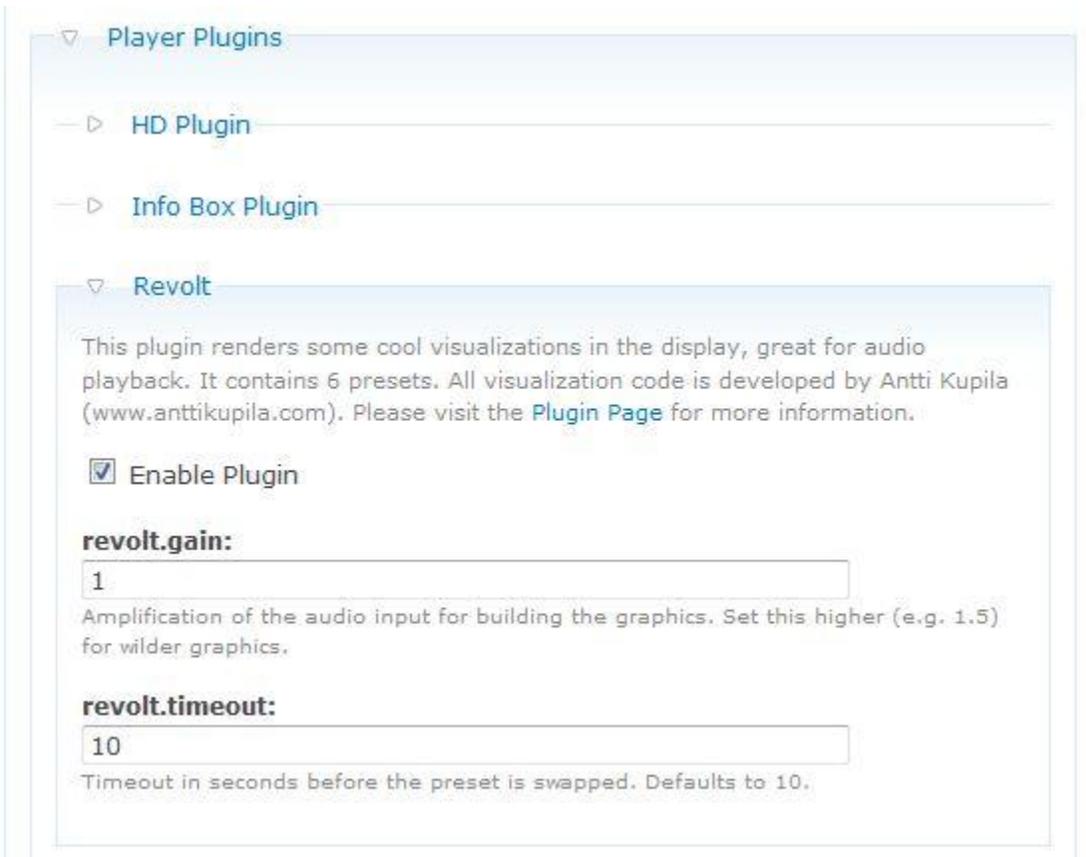
Plugins

The JW Player™ has a number of plugins available that enhance player functionality, or alter existing functionality. This section contains a subsection for each available plugin, providing a description of its function as well as any flashvars that may customize it. To use a particular plugin, expand that plugin's tab and check the "Enable Plugin" checkbox (see Figure 8). The fields below enable you to change the plugin's configuration options. Save your player as normal after you have configured the plugin.

Player Embed

The actual embedding of a JW Player™ into a Node body is controlled by the tagging system. The tagging system is quite flexible and allows for varying levels of complexity in your embedding.

The basic syntax for the tagging system is as follows: [jwplayer|param1=value1|param2=value2|…]].

This means that the simplest case would be to simply type [jwplayer] into your node body. Without specifying any parameters the module will use the default player settings and attempt to use the first attached piece of content present on the node. Attaching content to your node will be covered later.
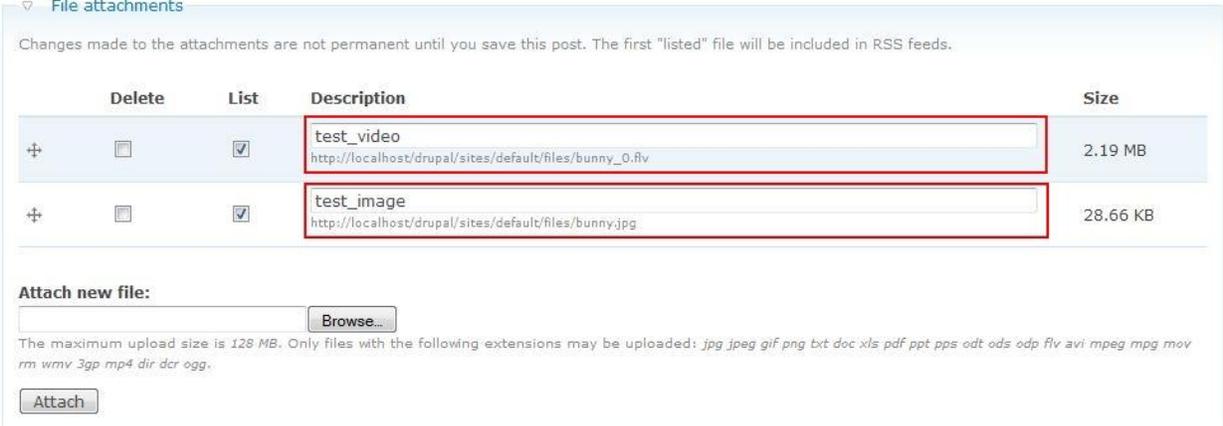
In most cases there are three parameters that you will likely always use and are as follows: config, file and image. The config parameter refers to a specific Player that you have configured. The content you wish to play is identified by the file parameter and the static image you wish to use is set by the image parameter. So a typical embed will take the following form:

[jwplayer|config=myplayer|file= http://www.mywebsite.com/myvideo.flv|image= http://www.mywebsite.com/myimage.jpg]

In the interest of clarity the tagging system supports the use of newlines as well. So the above tag can be rewritten in the following form:

[jwplayer

|config=myplayer

|file=http://www.mywebsite.com/myvideo.flv

|image=http://www.mywebsite.com/myimage.jpg]

In this case URLs are being used to specify where the content is located.

If you wish to give users the ability to upload video content during the creation of a node, activate the core Drupal Module called Upload. This allows users to upload files as attachments to a node (see Figure 9). The tagging system has the capability of referencing these attached files instead of using URLs. For each embedded player set the file and image parameters to the description value for the attachments that you wish to use. Attachment descriptions can contain spaces and the tagging system supports this. In order to use the attachments in the above image the embed tag would look like the following:

[jwplayer

|config=myplayer

|file=test_video

|image=test_image]

In addition to the three primary parameters you can also specify any number of flashvars. This gives you the flexibility of having node specific players without creating a new Player. Perhaps the most useful aspect of specifying flashvars at embed time is the fact that you can use them in conjunction with a Player configuration and they will override the settings specified by the Player you're using. This allows you to take advantage of an existing Player but make a slight adjustment for a special case. A complex embed would look like the following:

[jwplayer

|config=myplayer

|file=http://www.mywebsite.com/myvideo.flv

|image=http://www.mywebsite.com/myimage.jpg]

|backcolor=000066

|frontcolor=3333FF

|lightcolor=FFCC00]

In this case the color of the player has been customized. Again, even if the "myplayer" Player specified colors, the colors defined in the tag will take precedence.

Additional Considerations

Player Licensing

The player included with the module by default is the non commercial player. This version of the player is fully functional but purchasing a license provides you with several additional benefits. These include the ability to use the player for commercial sites and to set your own watermark. If you would like to purchase a commercial license please visit https://www.longtailvideo.com/players/order.

After purchasing a commercial license you will need to install it. To do so, please follow these steps:

- Download the JW Player™ Pro .swf file.
- Navigate to the jwplayermodule directory (/sites/all/modules/jwplayermodule).
- Delete the player.swf file located in the directory.

- Copy your JW Player™ Pro .swf file into the directory ensuring that the copied file is named player.swf.

The commercial player allows you to set your own watermark by making available an additional flashvar called logo.file. To make use of this flashvar you will need to set it in your Player Embed tag by giving it the URL of your logo file.

Using Your Own Skins

If you would like to include custom skins with the module, copy your .swf or .zip file to the jwplayermodule/skins directory.

Using Your Own Plugins

All of the plugins provided with this module are actually stored on the LongTail Video plugin repository and are remotely loaded by the player. However, the included plugins are only a subset and were selected for their popularity. If you wish to use any of the other plugins that are available you will need to leverage the Player Embed tag system and set the plugins flashvar to the plugin's repository name. To see all available plugins and their associated repository name please visit http://www.longtailvideo.com/addons/plugins. An example would be as follows:

[jwplayer

|config=myplayer

|file=test_video

|image=test_image

|plugins=plugin_repository_name

|plugin_repository_name.flashvar_one=value]

In addition, LongTail Video provides an easy to use Plugin SDK that is free for download. As a result it is possible for you to develop your own plugin to use in conjunction with this module.   If you develop your own plugin and you believe it will be beneficial to other users of the JW Player™ please feel free to submit it to LongTail Video for review. If your plugin is approved it will be added to the LongTail Video plugin repository for use by every user of the JW Player™.

Clearing the Cache

If you have made a change to a Player configuration and it doesn't seem to be reflected in the relevant embedded players try clearing your web browser's cache. In a lot of cases your browser will not detect that a change has been made and load the old version of the JW Player™. This is a common problem with Flash content on web pages.