News Items (RSS Feed)

> The News Feed allows administrators to broadcast timely messages and updates directly to their users. Its primary purpose is to provide a simple content management dashboard for drafting, scheduling, and publishing announcements, paired with an open syndication channel (RSS) for power users. This article is intended for OperationsCommander (OPSCOM) administrators responsible for managing site communications.

Setup and Configuration

This feature is a core communication tool used to push updates to the user portal and mobile application.

Admin Side: Administrators must have the appropriate system role permissions enabled to access the content and design configuration menus to manage news items.

User Side: End-users interact with the news feed directly from the main menu of the parking portal or mobile app. The system automatically checks for new messages once every 15 minutes, displaying an alert badge above the menu icon when unread messages are available. After new messages have been viewed, they will automatically be marked as read.

Using this Feature

Administrators can use the following instructions to navigate the management interface to create, schedule, and archive news broadcasts.

Accessing the Management Interface

1. Hover over **System Configuration** and click **Content & Designs** then **News Items**. Navigating this will bring you to the messages page.

Creating New Messages

1. Click the **Create New Message** button located at the top of the list.
2. Enter the title of the news post into the **Title** field.
3. Enter a short blurb describing what the post is about into the **Description** field.
4. Enter a link to a related webpage or the full article into the **Article Link** field.
5. Enter the exact text that will appear on the link button into the **Link Text** field.
6. Select the exact date on which the message will appear to users in the **Published** field.
7. Enable the **Visible** checkbox to ensure the message will be seen by users.
8. Click the **Save Changes** button.

> A message will only appear to site users if the **Visible** checkbox is enabled and the configured publish date has already passed. This allows administrators to draft and schedule messages to appear on a set date in the future.

Archiving and Deleting Messages

1. Click the **Archive** button next to a specific record in the list.
2. Click the **View Archived** button to open the list of historically archived messages.
3. Click the **Unarchive** button to restore a message, or click the **Delete** button to permanently remove it from the system.

> Once a message has been permanently deleted from the system via the archived list, it cannot be recovered.

Accessing the RSS Feed

Users can bypass the application entirely and pull updates directly into their favorite RSS feed readers (such as Feedly or Slack) using standard content syndication.

1. Access the RSS feed by appending `/newsfeed/rss` to the end of your standard OPSCOM website URL.

Best Practices and Considerations

- **Schedule announcements in advance: Leverage the publish date feature to schedule messages in the future.** This allows your team to prepare communications ahead of holidays, events, or planned maintenance without needing to manually publish them on the exact day.
- **Keep messaging concise: Keep your descriptions short and use the article link to provide detailed information.** The news feed is designed for quick blurbs; long text can quickly clutter the user's mobile feed and portal interface.

- **Archive outdated content: Regularly archive old messages to keep your active list clean.** Once a message is archived, it will no longer appear in the list of messages or be available to users, regardless of its previous visibility status.
- **Promote the RSS feed to power users: Encourage power users or internal staff to use the RSS feed URL.** This provides an alternative, highly efficient way for them to stay up-to-date on news posts without actively logging into the portal or checking the app.

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