

catalogue

A product display module for ImpressCMS

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Catalogue module

What does Catalogue do?

The Catalogue module is designed to display a simple grid of products, and optionally link them to an external eCommerce provider or shopping cart. It can also serve as a photo gallery. It is a visually-oriented module and you must upload a photo of each item that you want to display. A 'new products' RSS feed is also available.

Catalogue's preference and administration system allows you to configure the display of your catalogue on the fly, without having to modify the templates. For example, you can:

- Change the number of items displayed in a row and on a page.
- Change the display size of both thumbnails and full-sized product images.
- Alter the spacing between items and rows.
- Show or hide pricing information and change the currency symbol.
- Toggle individual items on or off with a single click on the administration side.
- Add a link pointing to a third-party shopping cart page when the user may buy it.
- Change the number of items in the 'new products' RSS feed.

Whenever you change your image size preferences, Catalogue will automatically rebuild thumbnails to your specifications.



User-side in grid view.

Installation and set up

Installation follows standard ImpressCMS procedure, with one extra step:

1. Extract the catalogue' directory from the compressed archive.
2. Upload it into the /modules directory of your ImpressCMS install.
3. Go to System => Modules in the administration section of your website and click on the action button to install the Catalogue module.
4. **If you are using ImpressCMS version 1.2.x:** You must also replace the following file in your ImpressCMS installation with an updated (fixed) version, which is included in the zip archive:
 - /libraries/smarty/icms_plugins/function.resized_image.php

Catalogue uses the resized_image Smarty plugin included with ImpressCMS to dynamically resize images when you change the image size preferences. The resized images are cached in '/cache/uploads/catalogue/' for fast page loads.

Unfortunately there is a bug in the current version of the plugin (as of ImpressCMS 1.2.5) which doesn't access the cached images and rebuilds them on each page load, creating extra work for your server and slowing down page loads. Replacing the file corrects this issue, and the patched version of the file is included in ImpressCMS as of version 1.3 and higher.

Note that Catalogue will still function if you don't update this plugin, but it will run much faster if you do. Thanks to Nachenko for fixing it.



Product in single view mode.

Catalogue administration

Adding items to your catalogue is very simple. Press the 'Add an item' button and fill in the form, suggested usage of the fields is given below. You can edit, delete and toggle items on or offline by pressing the appropriate icons. The arrangement of items on the user side is controlled by the 'order' field, with items being ordered from left to right on the page.

Field	Recommended usage
Title	The name of the item.
Description	An optional description of the item.
Photo (important)	1. Use a high quality original photograph, as Catalogue will be rebuilding images from this 'master'. If you start out with a highly compressed or degraded image your thumbnails will look bad. 2. The photo should be a bit larger than the maximum size you actually want to display your products at in single-view mode. This is because the function.resized_image.php scales images to match your preference settings. Images remain clear if you scale them down in size, but they get blurry if they are scaled up beyond the size of the original photo.
Model	An internal reference field for storing product numbers, for your own use.
Price	Self-explanatory. Note that you can set your default currency symbol in the module preferences.
Shipping cost	This field is not currently in use.
eCommerce link	If you have an external shopping cart or eCommerce provider, you can enter a link to the relevant purchasing page for this item here. The link will be placed on the product image, when it is displayed in single view.
Submitter	The person responsible for managing this product. Defaults to the logged in user.
Date	Timestamp for when the product was added to the catalogue.
Online	Toggle the product online or offline, products marked as 'off' are immediately removed from the user side catalogue and are no longer available in the search results. Note that you can toggle the online status on the administration index page, simply by clicking on the tick or cross icons.
Hit counter	Number of times this product has been viewed.
Enable linebreak	Inserts linebreaks, you may wish to adjust this depending on whether you are using HTML input or not.
Enable ImpressCMS codes	Allow bb code and custom tags.
Meta keywords	Appears in the metadata fields on this page.
Meta description	The title of the page, this is an important field and should accurately reflect your product.
Short URL	You can manually specify the short URL for the product here, but it will also be automatically be built for you from the title field if you don't.

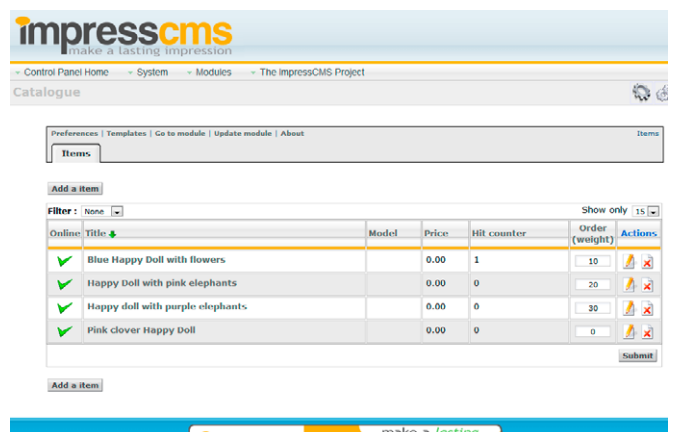
Configuring Catalogue preferences

The preference settings are largely self-explanatory. The main challenge is to choose appropriate sizes for product images and margins, to ensure that the catalogue fits properly within your site layout.

If you have a fixed-width theme, you need to find out how wide your main content area is (in pixels). Then consider what size you want to display product images at, and how large a margin you would like to have between them. That will allow you to estimate how many items you can fit on one row without breaking the layout. Once you have uploaded a few products, experiment with the image size/margin settings until you are happy with it.

Note that there are separate size image size preferences for the thumbnails (grid view) and full sized (single view) items. There are also settings for the maximum allowed file size, width and height of uploaded images. You may need to change these if your original images are very large.

You can also change the number of items that are included in the RSS feed of 'new products'.



Catalogue administration page.

User side

Catalogue has two user-side display modes. By default, Catalogue displays a grid of product photographs. If the number of items in the catalogue exceed the 'number of items per page' preference, pagination controls are inserted. Clicking on a product thumbnail image opens that item in single-view mode, where the full sized product image, description and price information are displayed.

eCommerce: Linking Catalogue to an external shopping cart

Catalogue can be used to link products on your site to an external shopping cart such as PayPal, 2Checkout and similar services. Typically, when you register an account with an external eCommerce provider, you enter details about all your products there. The eCommerce provider generates snippets of HTML code for each product, which can be used to display 'buy me' links or buttons on your site. A visitor clicking on a 'buy' button will be referred to the shopping cart and an item automatically added.

To link your products to an external shopping cart just enter the HTML code the eCommerce provider gives you in the 'eCommerce link' field when adding an item. This will display the 'buy me' link along side the product image in single item view. Please note that htmlpurifier which ships with ImpressCMS will not allow you to embed html forms or button tags for security reasons, they will not be displayed on the user side. Therefore, you should use a HTML snippet for displaying a text link rather than a form or button (most providers will give you code for both). However, if you prefer to have a button, Catalogue ships with a CSS class ("buttonstyle") that can be used to style a text link to look like a button. To use it, assign this class to a text link like this:

```
<a class="buttonstyle" href="linkToShoppingCart">Buy me</a>
```

Most providers will also offer you a HTML snippet for a second "view cart / checkout" button. This lets the visitor check the contents of their shopping cart or finalise the purchase if they wish. To add such a button, enter the HTML code in the Catalogue module preferences in the 'Checkout link' field. This will display a checkout button underneath the 'buy me' button when a product is viewed in single item mode. Use it like this.

```
<a class="buttonstyle" href="https://www.mycheckoutlink.com"View shopping cart / Check out</a>
```

Need help?

For general enquiries and support, please post your questions in the ImpressCMS community forums at the link below. The author is a regular denizen there. Please do NOT email support questions to the author. Use the forums instead where everyone can contribute and benefit from solutions:

<http://community.impresscms.org/modules/newbb/viewforum.php?forum=9>

Want some custom modifications to Catalogue?

The author is happy to entertain requests for custom modifications to the Catalogue module. Contact simon@isengard.biz.