

USENET NEWSGROUP

http://www.tutorialspoint.com/internet_technologies/usenet_newsgroup.htm

Copyright © tutorialspoint.com

Usenet USErNETwork

Like mailing lists Usenet is also a way of sharing information. It was started by Tom Truscott and Jim Ellis in 1979. Initially it was limited to two sites but today there are thousands of Usenet sites involving millions of people.

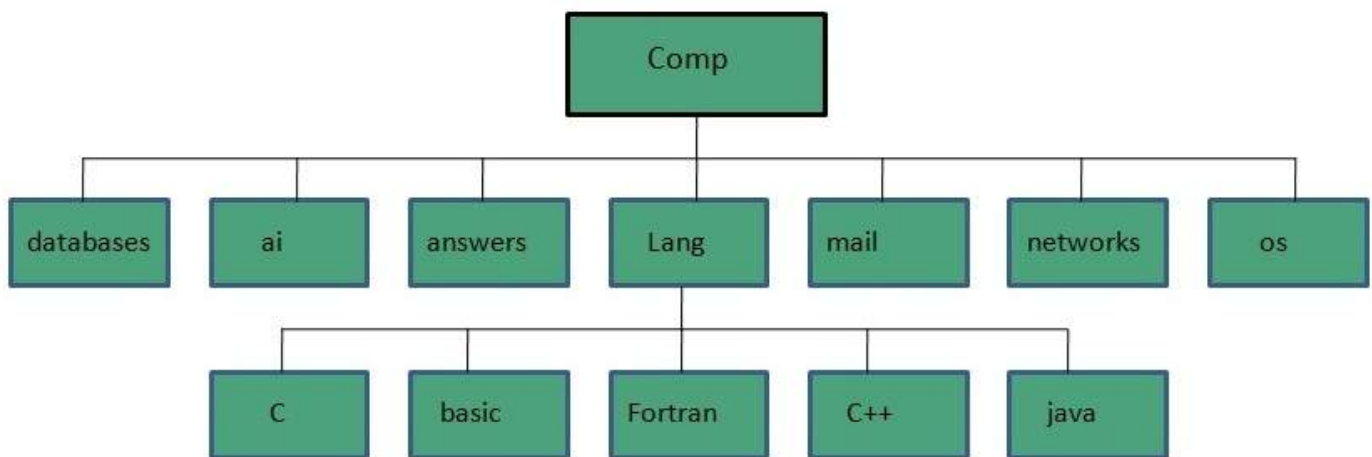
Usenet is a kind of discussion group where people can share views on topic of their interest. The article posted to a newsgroup becomes available to all readers of the newsgroup.

Newsgroup Classification

There exist a number of newsgroups distributed all around the world. These are identified using a hierarchical naming system in which each newsgroup is assigned a unique name that consists of alphabetic strings separated by periods.

The leftmost portion of the name represents the top-level category of the newsgroup followed by subtopic. The subtopic can further be subdivided and subdivided even further *ifneeded*.

For example, the newsgroup **comp.lang.C++** contains discussion on **C++** language. The leftmost part **comp** classifies the newsgroup as one that contains discussion of computer related topics. The second part identifies one of the subtopic **lang** that related to computer languages. The third part identifies one of the computer languages, in this case **C++**.



Newsgroup hierarchy of 'Comp'

The following table shows the top-level hierarchies of Usenet Newsgroup:

Comp.*	Computer related topics including computer hardware, software, languages etc.	Comp.lang.java.beans Comp.database.oracle
News.*	Newsgroup and Usenet topics	News.software.nntp
Rec.*	Artistic activities, hobbies, or recreational activities such as books, movies etc.	Rec.arts.animation
Sci.*	Scientific topics	Sci.bio.botany
Soc.*	Social issues and various culture	Soc.culture.india
Talk.*	Conventional subjects such as religion, politics etc.	Soc.politics.india
Humanities.*	Art, literature, philosophy and culture	Humanities.classics

Misc.*	Miscellaneous topics i.e. issues tat may not fit into other categories	Misc.answers Misc.books.technical
--------	--	--------------------------------------

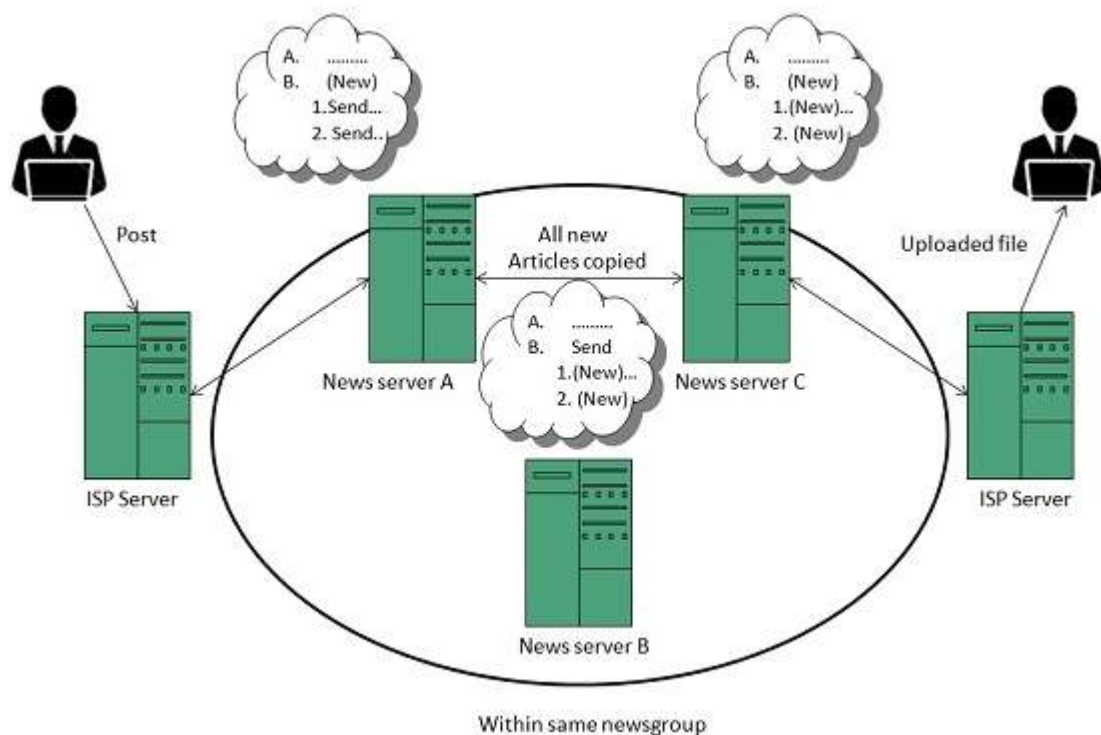
Working of Usenet Newsgroup

When a newsreader such as outlook express connects to a news server, it downloads all the new messages posted in the subscribed newsgroup. We can either reply a message after reading or post a news article to the news server.

The article posted to a news server is appended to the file maintained for that newsgroup Then the news server shares article with other news servers that are connected to it.

Then each news server compares if both carry the same newsgroup. If yes, then by comparing the files it checks that if there are any new articles in the file, if so they are appended to the file.

The updated file of the news servers is then sent to other news servers connected to it. This process is continues until all of the news servers have updated information.



Reading Articles

If user wants to read article, user has to connect to the news server using the newsreader. The newsreader will then display a list of newsgroups available on the news server where user can subscribe to any of the news group. After subscription the newsreader will automatically download articles from the newsgroup.

After reading the article user can either post a reply to newsgroup or reply to sender by email. The newsreader saves information about the subscribed newsgroups and articles read by the user in each group.

Posting an Article

In order to send new article to a newsgroup, user first need to compose an article and specify the names of the newsgroup to whom he/she wants to send. An article can be sent to one or more newsgroup at a time provided all the newsgroups are on same news server.

It is also possible to cancel the article that you have posted but if someone has downloaded an article before cancellation then that person will be able to read the

Replying an Article

After reading the article user can either post a reply to newsgroup or reply to sender by email. There are two options available Reply and Reply group. Using Reply, the reply mail will be sent to the autor of the article while Reply group will send a reply to whole of the newsgroup.

Cancelling an Article

To cancle an article after it is sent, select the message and click Message > Cancel message. It will cancle the message from the news server. But if someone has downloaded an article before cancellation then that person will be able to read the article.

Usenet netiquette

While posting an article on a newsgroup, one should follow some rules of netiquette as listed below:

- Spend some time in understanding a newsgroup when you join it for first time.
- Article posted by you should be easy to read, concise and grammatically correct.
- Information should be relevant to the article title.
- Don't post same article to multiple newsgroups.
- Avoid providing your business email address while subscribing to a newsgroup as may be used by spammers.
- Avoid using capital letters as someone may interpret as shouting.
- Prefer to use plain text wherever possible in your article.

Mailing list vs. Newsgroup

S.N.	Mailing List	Newsgroup
1.	Messages are delivered to individual mailboxes of subscribed member of group.	Messages are not posted to individual mailboxes but can be viewed by anyone who has subscribed to that newsgroup.
2.	Working with mailing list is easier than newsgroup. It is easy to compose and receive emails.	Working with a particular newsgroup requires proper knowledge of that newsgroup.
3.	In order to send or receive mails, you required an email program.	It requires a newsgroup reader.
4.	Messages are delivered to certain group of people.	Messages are available to public.
5.	Mailing list does not support threaded discussion.	Newsgroup supports threaded discussion.
6.	Messages delivered to listed subscribers can not be cancelled.	Article posted on a newsgroup can be cancelled.