



Dialogr

User Manual

**Web Applications for Group
Discussion, Deliberation, and Decision**

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Dialogr Overview

Dialogr is a participatory decision-making application grounded on objectives, alternatives, and collective choice. Participatory decision-making encourages group decision-makers to dynamically create alternatives and assess the advantages and disadvantages of these alternatives, with agreed upon goals and objectives in mind. The participatory process is a very effective way to make decisions based on the wisdom of the group.

Dialogr provides methods to

- Tap Group Wisdom
- Generate Ideas
- Evaluate Ideas
- Find The Best Ideas
- Build Consensus
- Aid Decision-Making

Dialogr Quick Start Guide

Get started with Dialogr with the following the steps

1. Create your Topic
2. Distribute your Topic to your intended participants
3. The team of participants adds their own ideas and rate and comment on others' ideas
4. The top ideas will emerge

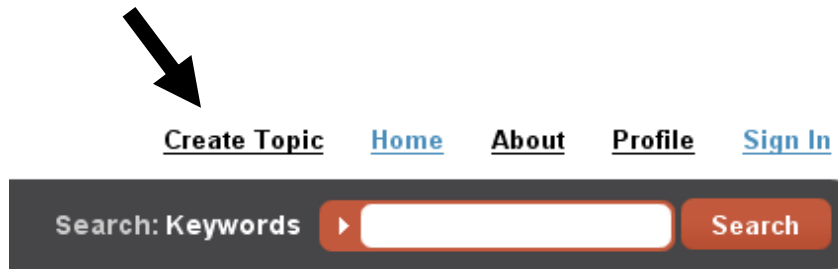
Registration and passwords
Crafting an effective Topic

1. The Topic Leader creates a Topic

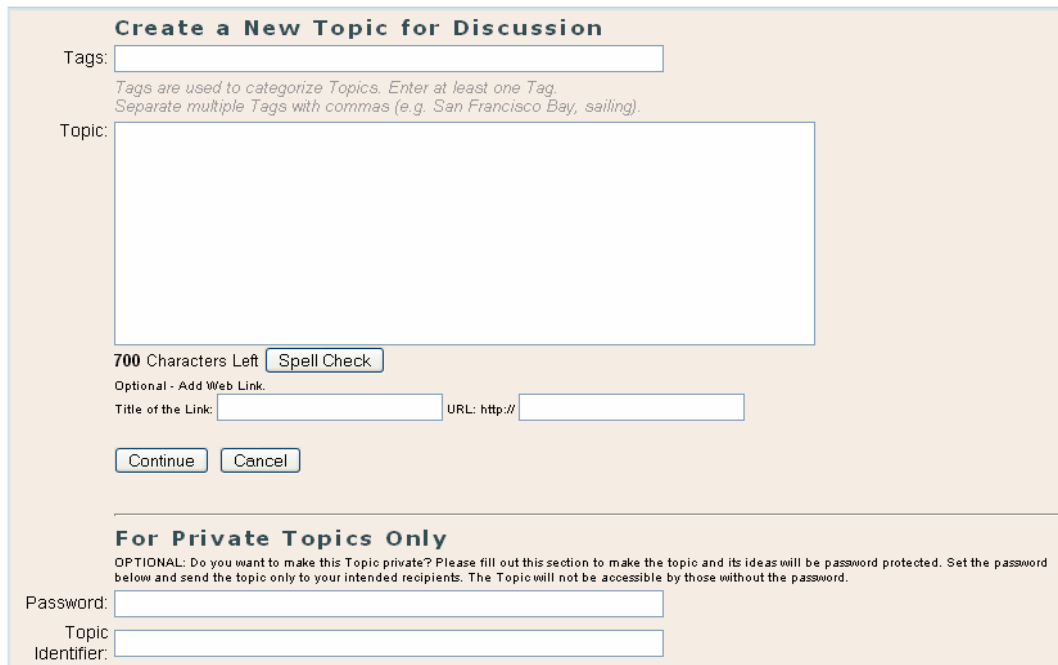
A topic leader creates a topic for the dialog. Good question phrasing will improve the end results of your dialog. It is highly recommended to put time into creating a clearly worded, effective Topic for your participants. Please see the section on [Crafting an effective Topic](#)

You must be a registered user to create a Topic. For questions on Registration please see the section on [Registration](#).

1.1 **Start** by Selecting [Create Topic](#) from any Dialogr page.



1.2 **Create your topic tags.** After you select create topic you will be presented with the Create Topic screen.

A screenshot of the "Create a New Topic for Discussion" form. The form has a light beige background. At the top, it says "Create a New Topic for Discussion". Below this, there is a "Tags:" label followed by a text input field. Underneath the tags field, there is a small italicized instruction: "Tags are used to categorize Topics. Enter at least one Tag. Separate multiple Tags with commas (e.g. San Francisco Bay, sailing)." Below the tags field is a "Topic:" label followed by a large text area for the topic. Below the topic text area, there is a "700 Characters Left" indicator and a "Spell Check" button. Below that, there is an "Optional - Add Web Link:" section with two input fields: "Title of the Link:" and "URL: http://". At the bottom of this section are "Continue" and "Cancel" buttons. Below a horizontal line, there is a section titled "For Private Topics Only" with a small italicized instruction: "OPTIONAL: Do you want to make this Topic private? Please fill out this section to make the topic and its ideas will be password protected. Set the password below and send the topic only to your intended recipients. The Topic will not be accessible by those without the password." Below this instruction are three input fields: "Password:", "Topic Identifier:", and another empty field.

Start by entering at a least one tag to help identify and categorize your topic; for example a topic about resource planning may be tagged as “resource planning” or just “resources”. At least one tag is required but you may enter as many tags as you wish.

1.3 **Enter your topic.** After settling on the written expression of your Topic, enter the text in the Topic text box. A well written topic helps participants’ understand goals of objectives of the overall dialog.

1.4 As an option you may add a **Web Link** to the topic. For example, if you want your participants to read background material on the topic you may provide a link to the information.

1.5 If you wish to **password protect** the dialog, you may enter a password as the final step. This is an optional step, but it is recommended if you want to restrict who can enter and participate in the dialog. The **Topic Identifier** is used to help locate and organize your topics. Choose a word or phrase that describes the topic, but does not include any information that you do not wish to be publicly shared.

1.6 **Spell Check and Preview** the topic. Once you are satisfied, prepare to distribute the Topic Link to your participants.

1.7 As Topic Leader, you may want to create one or more of your own ideas, to help **kick start** the discussion. See the section below regarding adding ideas.

2. Distribute the Topic to the Participants

2.1 You will need to ensure all intended participants have the Web Link to your Topic. You can distribute the link any way you wish, for example by copying and pasting the URL into your email or IM program. However Dialogr makes distribution simple with built-in email distribution. While looking at the topic, navigate to the right side of the page and select Email this Topic.



You will be presented with the screen below.

Email this Topic...

Cut and Paste the following text into your email client and add your own personal message:

```
I thought you might be interested in this Dialogr topic:  
"What features of social networking sites (i.e., Facebook, Myspace)  
do you feel are missing or need to be improved?"
```

```
To read the Top 5 Ideas on this Topic, click on or type the URL :  
http://www.dialogr.com/postThought.cfm?topicid=806
```

Done

Simply cut and paste this message into your email client and edit as needed.

3. Participants Create Ideas, and Comment on and Rate Ideas

Once each participant has received the Dialogr Topic web link, they will have access to the Topic. Encourage your participants to add ideas, rate ideas, and add comments.

Your participants will see the Topic, such as the one below.

The Topic

What innovations (novel ideas), new products, or product modifications could improve the lives of young adults at home, work, or play?

Rate the Ideas below

The Top 5 Ideas

Your Rating

- 1 Universal phone chargers in public places, for when the phone dies in public
Posted by [Kevin Tsui](#) April 5, 2007, 1:14 PM [comments \(36\)](#) ☆ RATE ME ☆
46 ratings
- 2 Ok, so you have lost your cell phone ..again. You would call it, but its on silent. What if when you called it, you could type in a password that would put the ringtone back on, so you could find it.
Posted by [Crystal](#) April 5, 2007, 10:43 AM [comments \(27\)](#) ☆ RATE ME ☆
48 ratings
- 3 Wallets with smart locks so only the owners are able to open them.
Posted by [Jose Molina](#) April 5, 2007, 1:17 PM [comments \(22\)](#) ☆ RATE ME ☆
43 ratings
- 4 Soundproofing paint
Posted by [kpuder](#) April 5, 2007, 10:54 AM [comments \(33\)](#) ☆ RATE ME ☆
45 ratings

Each Topic has may have multiple ideas and comments on each idea.

Dialogr displays the top 5 ideas first, followed by the rest of the ideas.

3.1 Rating Ideas

To rate an idea each participant clicks on the stars to the right of the idea. The higher number of the stars, the stronger the agreement.

- ★☆☆☆☆ 1 star = Strongly Disagree
- ★★☆☆☆ 2 stars = Disagree
- ★★★☆☆ 3 stars = Neutral or Maybe
- ★★★★☆ 4 stars = Agree
- ★★★★★ 5 stars = Strongly Agree

Once a star is clicked the rating is immediately captured.

Topic ratings are refreshed about once every two minutes. Please check back to see your impact on the topic results.

Participants are encouraged to rate all ideas and check back for new added ideas.

3.2 Adding Ideas.

For a useful dialog, participants should contribute to the dialog by adding their own ideas. To add an idea, a participant clicks on the [Add your Ideas](#) Link.



Idea Box

Type your idea in the box below:

Spell CheckSubmit Idea

After writing their idea, the participant may spell check their idea. Each participant will preview their idea before final submittal. Once an idea is submitted, the idea *cannot* be changed. This prevents a idea creator from changing an idea after another participant has rated the idea. A participant may submit as many ideas as desired.

A participant's new idea is automatically assigned a five star rating from that participant. However the participant may rate their own idea whatever they wish by returning to the Topic Dialog page.

3.3 Comments

Comments are an extremely useful part of any dialog. Comments can be used by another participant to explain why they rated a certain idea the way they did. Comments also provide a chance for another participant to ask the idea creator for clarification on their idea. The idea creator can respond in the comments section as well to any questions, criticism or praise of their own ideas.

Comments are initially “hidden” from the default topic view; for each idea, click on [Show Comments](#) to reveal the comments.

If you would like to add a comment, click on [Add Comment](#), and a comment box will open up to write a comment. Type your comment in the box provided, spell check and submit your comment to appear with the idea.

Hit the [Show Comments](#) to reveal all the comments per idea.

Hit the [Add Comment](#) to add your own comment on the idea or to respond to another user’s comment.

The screenshot displays a forum interface with the following content:

- Idea 3:** "Wallets with smart locks so only the owners are able to open them." Posted by [Jose Molina](#) April 5, 2007, 1:17 PM. Includes links for [Show Comments \(22\)](#) and [Add Comment](#). A "RATE ME" star icon shows 43 ratings.
- Idea 4:** "Soundproofing paint." Posted by [kpuder](#) April 5, 2007, 10:54 AM. Includes links for [Show Comments \(33\)](#) and [Add Comment](#). A "RATE ME" star icon shows 45 ratings. A black arrow points to the [Show Comments](#) link.
- Comments:**
 - Comment by [sivata](#) April 5, 2007, 10:34 AM: "waterproof cell phones... well if they have cameras that are waterproof, they should be able to do this too! It's much needed! Cell phones go everywhere!" A black arrow points to the [Add Comment](#) link.
 - Comment by [CMB_K910](#) April 10, 2007 11:32 AM: "waterproof cell phones would be smart, that seems to be the biggest death of phones"
 - Comment by [Kevin Tsui](#) April 10, 2007 12:40 PM: "my friend dropped his phone in my fishtank and it was fine! so funny, I think it is definitely possible."
 - Comment by [Annie Winners](#) April 10, 2007 11:47 PM: "i think it needs to happen cuz i have dropped mine in the toilet along with a lot of my other friends"
 - Comment by [sivata](#) April 11, 2007 7:00 PM: "love it...ive ruined 3 phones because ive dropped it in a puddle of alcohol or a cup of beer."

Add your own comment in the Comment Box and then hit Submit Comment.

The Topic, The Idea and the Comments

Topic:
What innovations (novel ideas), new products, or product modifications could improve the lives of young adults at home, work, or play? [← Back to the Dialog](#)

Idea:
waterproof cell phones

Add Your Comment:

500 Characters Left




4. The top ideas emerge for decision making and establishing priorities

After all participants have had a chance to add their own ideas, rate and comment on other ideas, the top ideas will emerge. The current top 5 ideas are always available to all participants. Only the Topic Leader has access to the full statistical report. While looking at your Topic, navigate to the right side of the page and select Stats View. (Note: You must be registered and signed in to be recognized as the Topic Leader.)



5. Registration and Passwords

On the top of your screen you will see the following navigation bar. If this your first time and you have not registered, you must register before you sign in and enter the dialog. Click on **Register**.



You will then see the box. If this your first time and you have not registered, you must register before you **Login** and enter the dialog. One registered you can Login.

Why sign up with Dialogr? Too many reasons to list here, but let's start with the top ones: Ability to create your own topics and sign your ideas (and stop being a guest to your own thoughts).

Display Name:	<input type="text"/>	<i>The name used to sign your ideas and topics</i>
Email:	<input type="text"/>	<i>Log-in with this address</i>
Password:	<input type="password"/>	
Confirm Password:	<input type="password"/>	

Registered users can create Topics on Dialogr, “sign” ideas with their display name, and manage a profile of their favorite ideas and topics. Registration only requires three fields.

The **display name** is what is shown to other users on Dialogr. You can choose any display name you wish, including a real name or an anonymous one.

Your **email address** is required to login into the system. Dialogr email updates on your topics and password management will be sent to this email address as well. This email address will not be shared or shown to others on the Dialogr application.

Please remember the **password** you choose when you register. Dialogr can automatically remember your password and login information by selecting one of the “remember me” options when logging into Dialogr. If you forget your password, select the [Forgot Your Password?](#) link when attempting to sign in. Dialogr will send your password to your registered email address.

6. Crafting an effective Topic

Creating a good topic is critical to a successful dialog. You'll want to spend a few minutes reflecting on your topic and how others may interpret what you are asking. A second opinion may be helpful before you begin wide distribution. Below are suggestions for developing an effective Topic.

- Your *topic* question should be clear and easily understood.
- Avoid *topic* questions with simply Yes or No answers; the *topic* question should encourage a range of suggestions, a variety of *ideas*.
- Seek simplicity. Complex *topics* tend to have connected component *ideas*. Complex *topics* often can be broken up into simpler parts and simpler questions. *A simple method of reducing complexity is to think of your topic as a question, one with a range of answers.*
- Some questions yield underlying issues. An example question is
 - What is preventing the USA from becoming 100% energy independent?
- Some questions yield causes. Example questions are
 - Why is the USA dependent upon foreign Oil?
 - Why is solar power an under used resource?
- Some questions yield a range of solutions. Example questions are
 - What can be done to encourage less reliance on gasoline powered vehicles?
 - What can be done to promote a greater reliance on solar power?
- Some questions consider strengths (or weaknesses) of a solution. An example question is
 - What are the disadvantages of fuel efficient automobiles?

Dialogr is your quick way to uncover new ideas, find the best ideas, reach consensus, and make decisions. Get started by

- Registering and/or signing in
- Creating your Topic and

- Sending your Topic URL to the members of your group.

With idea submissions and user ratings you will see the top ideas emerge. Give Dialogr a try now.