

# Welcome to the APLN networking web site!

This Getting Started Guide is intended for new users who are not familiar with web-based collaboration tools. More advanced users will find it easier to simply click around and explore the site.

Discussions are one of the most popular features of this site. Detailed information about discussions is below the Home Page section.

## THE HOME PAGE

As a general pattern, items displayed may be links or abbreviations of more lengthy text. Click on at item's title to see more details.

The site is optimized for Internet Explorer, but you don't need IE to use the site. This guide explains the basic features available with any browser – curious IE users will find some convenience features such as live pull down lists on certain items.

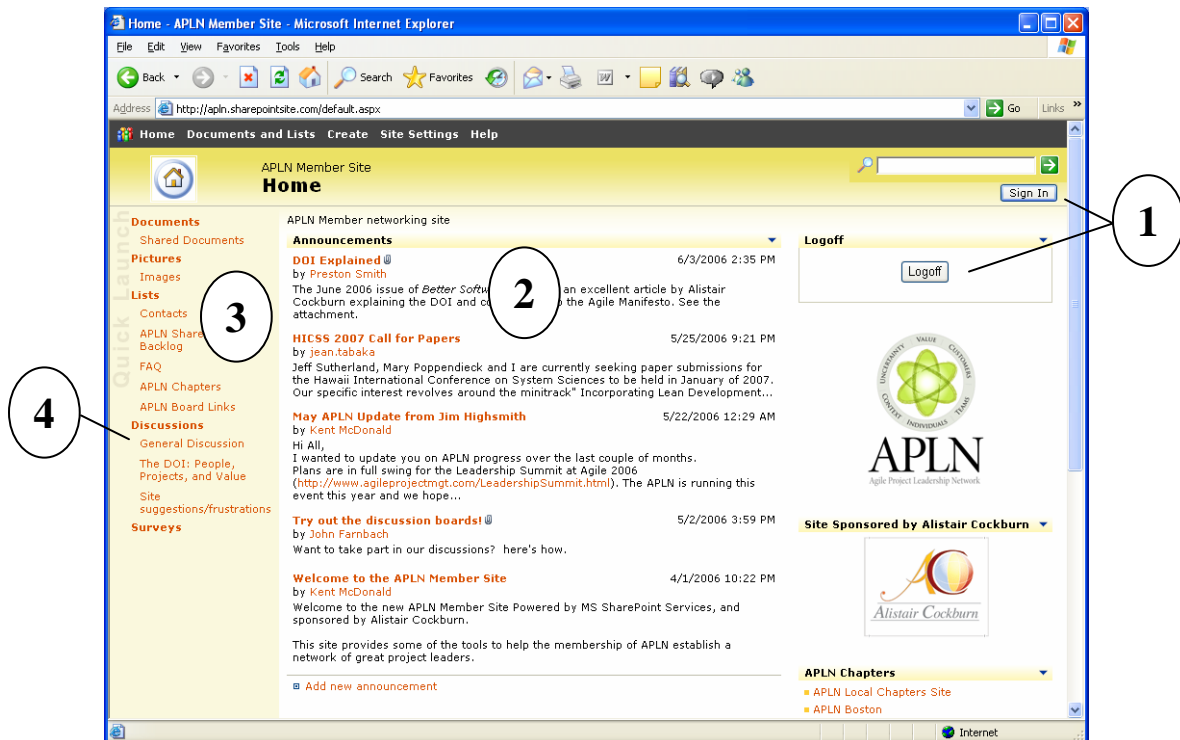


Figure 1: The home page – top section

## ***Sign In/Logoff (1)***

You don't have to be a registered APLN member to access the public content on the site. Non-members have read only access, while registered members can post and modify material. To become a member, look for the "Join APLN" link in the table in at the bottom right of the home page.

Registered APLN *members* click "Sign In" to log on. Use the member ID and password you received when you registered. If you're using a public computer of some kind, remember to log off to prevent vandalism to the site.

## ***Announcements (2)***

Learn about upcoming events and issues of interest to APLN members and the general Agile community. A paper clip icon following the title means there is an attachment. Click the title to access an attachment or to see the full text of the announcement..

Click the author's name to send the author an email.

*Members* can contribute a new announcement by clicking the "Add New Announcement" link at the bottom of this section

## ***Quick Launch Bar (3)***

Located on the left side of the page, the quick launch bar provides access to a number of features, including

- **Documents**, where *members* can share and collaborate on documents.
- **Pictures**, where users can view and *members* can upload images of interest.
- **Lists**, for useful lists, such as contact lists and other resources. FAQ about using this site is one of the lists in the List section.
- **Discussions** are covered in more detail below.
- **Surveys** give *members* the capability to poll site visitors about topics of interest. Non members can participate in surveys but cannot initiate them.

## ***The rest of the home page (not shown)***

The screen shot in Figure 1 doesn't show the bottom part of the home page. There are three useful sections in that part

### ***APLN Chapters***

This section has links to local APLN chapters' web site. Local chapters provide person to person contact with other agile practitioners through meetings and social events.

*Members* can add a new link by clicking "add new link" at the bottom of this section.

### ***RSS feeds***

This section has links to the RSS feeds of the APLN board, where you can follow the latest thinking of leading Agile practitioners.

## ***Links***

This section provides links to useful sites and information.

Members can add a new link by clicking “add new link” at the bottom of the section.

## **Discussions (#4 in Figure 1)**

The discussion boards are one of the useful features of the site. Discussions are organized at the top level into Discussion Boards. Individual discussions are posted on an appropriate board, and replies to a discussion are threaded below the lead discussion posting.

Each discussion board title is listed under the **Discussions** heading. To follow or participate in a discussion, click on the discussion board title. This gets you to a page for this board. This page is best viewed in the threaded view. If it opens in the flat view, click “threaded” in the upper left.

This Discussion board page lists the title of each individual discussion thread on the board. Click the “+” icon by the title expand a thread. You can also use the “expand/collapse” button at the top of the page to expand all the threads at once.

Expanding threads shows you the first few lines of the posting. Click on the title of a posting to see the complete text

Members can reply to posting. Open the full text of the posting by clicking its title, then use the “post reply” button at the top of the page. Be sure to click “save and close” when you’re done, or your reply will be lost.

Members can start a new discussion on an existing discussion board by clicking “new discussion” at the top of the discussion board page.

Members can start a new discussion board by clicking the Discussions link on the home page, then “Create Discussion Board” at the top of Discussions page.

## ***Using alerts (Members)***

You can use the “alert me” function to get an email when a posting is created or changed. You can set up alerts for a specific discussion thread or a whole discussion board and can schedule them immediately, daily, or weekly. (You can also tie alerts to other postings on the site, such as documents or announcements. Details here are for the discussions.)

To set up an alert for a discussion board, go to the page for that discussion board and use the “alert me” button on the left side of the page. To set up an alert for a specific discussion thread, open the page for the thread and use the “alert me” button on the left side of the page.

These links take you to a “New Alert” page with the discussion item writ large at the top of the page. Choose the options you want and click OK or cancel if you don’t want those alerts after all.

To delete a particular alert, go through the “site settings” link on the top of the home page. Look for the “My Alerts...” link under “Manage my Information” heading.